

# The Vine

The Vine Committee

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## EDITOR'S WORD

It is sad that the NKF had to face a public furore due in a large part to the issue of a large salary expense.

As I contemplated the issue, a thought came into my mind: Does not everyone deserve to be paid for his work. The Bible states it clearly:

*The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages." (1 Timothy 5:17-18)*

*"In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.*

*But I have not used any of these rights." (1 Corinthians 9:14-15)*

Unfortunately, in a non-profit organization, the income is derived from people from many walks of life, some like the poor widow with only 2 coins and others like the rich people who like to boast of their charitable deeds. Maybe that is why the apostle Paul

chose not to take salary from the Corinthians because precisely he might find himself in the same predicament as the CEO of NKF. How could Paul be enjoying a luxurious life if some poor starving widow was paying his salary? He would lose the "moral right" to preach to her.

As a church, we sometimes face the dilemma of having to strike a balance in deciding the subsidies and bonuses provided for the full time staff whose salaries may exceed those of the ordinary member who contributes to their salaries. There is no running away from the fact that the salary element is the largest portion of the entire church expenditure. The balance then is to ensure that the full time staffs are rewarded with a reasonable amount, which is palatable to the people, and not an exorbitant amount, which may make the people unhappy.

There is also the perception of sacrifice and volunteerism to balance because many of the people who volunteer to work in a charitable organization do it free of charge thus making the professional charity worker look like a money grabber,

forgetting that they have a means of income whilst these professionals do not have another source of income.

Transparency is the key? Would people be happy to give knowing that it takes a great number of them to contribute to 1 person's salary? Fortunately in a Christian environment, the people are not giving to a person but to God. Does God need your money? Doesn't He own the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10)?

When I was the treasurer, I too faced this dilemma of deciding whether to give an extra bonus when I knew so many of my brothers and sisters have been retrenched or on the verge and yet I also knew that a number of us had received attractive bonuses. So how do you balance it? Transparency must work both ways. Do I really know if you have contributed to the max or are holding back? Finally the decision not to give the extra bonus was taken because there just wasn't enough funds. I am glad the full time staffs were not too disappointed with the decision. They were admirably very understanding.

What would have happened if we had sufficient funds to give an extra bonus? The decision would be much harder then because we could have ended up in the same predicament as the NKF, with contrariarn voices about the bonus declared being too high. What about churches that pay their staffs well because they can afford? Do they face this problem? How do they reconcile their full time workers living in condos

and driving expensive cars while the people travel by public transport from their HDB flats to church?

Simply put, we are giving to God as Abraham gave to Melchizedek in response to his higher position. It is God's will that the money He receives is disbursed to the people who preach and teach. We are thus back to where I first started out that God has commanded that the worker deserves his wages.

The problem to manage is a balance between what is perceived as too high a salary and what is a salary commensurate with the responsibilities of the work. The pastor is like a CEO of an organization but in our church, his pay is about that of a lower level executive. Yet I have heard comments about how pastors in other churches are even lower paid. So where is the line?

If you have any views, please share it so that the church can be transparent and equitable about all this in a manner satisfactory to all without inadvertently committing a travesty.

***Martin Cheah***



# *Angry enough to kill or be killed?*

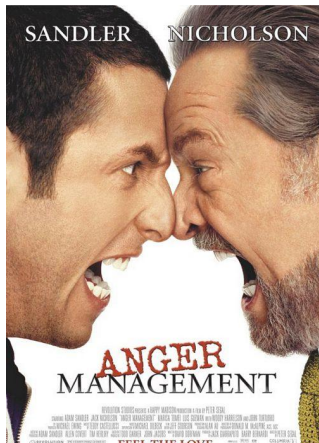
One of the commandments of God says, “You shall not murder.” (Exodus 20:13)

So you have heard the commandment. Jesus gave it further illumination, “You have heard that ... anyone who murders will be subject to judgment. But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.” (Matt. 5:21-22)

What has anger got to do with murder? Perhaps, part of the answer can be found in the news from time to time. Anger begets anger and in due course it leads to death when it spins out of control. “Angry enough to kill” or “Angry enough to be killed” may well be good topics for breakfast discussions, if only it would make us aware of the need for sobriety in stressful situations.

Murder has its source in the heart. Do you have the heart to kill? Well, if you are angry enough to lose your heart (compassion), you are at

risk of losing your soul. How a very angry person would wish for the death (literally or figuratively) of his anger target or, most unfairly, a proxy target! Hence, it is not too difficult to appreciate the quintessence of this statement: “Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.” (1 Jn 3:15)



How would you react if your boss tells it straight to your face, “You are such a fool, good for nothing, stupid ...”? It is either you are truly justified to be called such names or ‘Raca’ (empty-head), or it is proof of the caller losing his sense in his fits of anger. How treacherous anger can be! If you see no justification and you still have your sensibility in place, unlike the name caller, there is really no need for you to lose your mind to anger; otherwise, you are no different from the other person and you risk the peril of a clash of titanic proportions. You claim to be no fool, so do not let your words in response to the slander betrays any foolishness on your part. “For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.” (Matt. 12:37) He who calls another person ‘Raca’ unjustifiably is certainly imprudent. (Can there be any justification at all to

affix the name ‘Raca’ to a person we are angry with?) – Equally so regardless of whether one is in a superior or subordinate position.

When Jesus made reference to the commandment against murder and the associated punishment, it is evident that in God’s view anger is as serious as murder and thus warrants as severe a reproach or punishment. In our human way of thinking, perhaps, the equivalent degrees of potential consequences can justify the view of equivalent seriousness of both transgressions.

Even if we look at Jesus’ instruction against acting in anger as a general principle, allowing for exceptional circumstances (as in divorce and other examples of principles of the law subject to qualifications such as in Matt. 12:3-8), it cannot escape our attention that in most everyday experiences the principle holds – for ‘exception’ is just that, an uncommon departure. Not acting in anger is as basic as loving your neighbour as you love yourself. Put in another way, we do not do to others what we do not want others to do to us. Let’s switch for a while to an example in marriage.

Between a man and his wife, he cannot wait for her to be submissive if he cannot love her like loving himself regardless of whether she is “like this one” or “like that one”. Similarly, she cannot wait for

him to love her unconditionally if she cannot be submissive for better or worse, in sickness or health. To expect one’s spouse to be what he/she ought to be “before I will love (or submit)” is the bane of many relationships that fall asunder. It was the hardness of the human heart that led Moses to permit divorce. (Matt. 19:8) In the purity of people’s relationships with God and with one another, the best for us to enjoy is in accord with the prescription of His Holy Word, with each person treating others well without expecting the same in return. If everyone does that, there is none who will be treated badly, and therefore bliss in relationships become the order of the day.

A husband beating up his wife because of his own sin of infidelity, or a wife belittling her husband because of her own superior achievements, do not help to soften some difficult problem that already exists in a relationship. Instead, they entrench anger and let the hurt grow until the couple’s relationship with God is also dealt a deadly blow. Anger begets more anger and the spiraling down to the depths requires gargantuan efforts for deliverance.

A superior-subordinate relationship (real or assumed) in the house that gets into the head and goes awry is the same as such a relationship in an office or in a general social setting (when one person presupposes superiority or inferiority in some

unhealthy way). Whatever the environment is, the same outstanding principle of God's Word applies for our own well being:

*"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along*

*with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Eph 4:29-32)*

The tit for tat kind of man's actions is anathema to Godly love. Matt. 6:14-5 talks of returning forgiveness for sin. The same spirit can be applied to handing back peace for anger, so that we do not end up angry enough to kill or be killed in whatever sense – spiritual, corporeal, relationship-wise, career-wise, metaphorical or literal.

*John Lee*

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## The Straits Times Wednesday July 13, 2005

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### Pray, don't wear miniskirts

MUMBAI

MINISKIRTS, shorts and spaghetti straps are being shown the door at Catholic churches here after Mumbai's archbishop

urged parishioners to dress modestly.

"The dress code requires our special attention," said Archbishop Cardinal Ivan Dias in a recent Catholic newsletter. "I exhort the lay

faithful to come to church functions attired in a way that shows their respect for the sacred place they are worshipping in."

Mumbai is home to 500,000 Roman Catholics and is arguably the

centre of Indian fashion.

Agreeing with the archbishop's sentiments, homemaker Alice Fernandes, 68, said: "People wear shorts, strappy outfits and backless dresses to church...So many don't concentrate on God but admire the outfits."

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A small article in page 10 caught my eye. The Catholic church in Mumbai, India felt that a certain dress code was in order in church because it was a sacred place. A 68-year-old homemaker politely mentioned that many will lose their concentration on God but admire the outfits. Frankly I don't know where to look when serving the Communion wine. So please do not stumble your Communion Ushers.

# PHILIPPINES MISSION TRIP

by Samuel Tay

First and foremost, we would like to thank all of you for praying for us, because we sure needed the prayers on this trip. It was a trip primarily to reach out to street children, who have been abandoned or ran away from their homes, and were eking out an existence on the streets.

The sheer poverty of the slums, in stark contrast to the metropolitan buildings, side-by-side only served to illustrate the excesses of the rich neglecting the poverty of the their fellow man. And if this is not enough, besides being oppressed financially, these street children are oppressed spiritually. And if at this point, anyone



believes that Philippines is a predominantly Christian country, he or she should think again. We, are 3% of the population, and are considered a cult group by the heavily dubious Catholic administration.

However, in addition to the full armor of Christ, we were equipped with an extra evangelical tool, which combined psychological counseling with the power of the Word of God. (The Green Bag) Though initially skeptical, God used the Green bag process to give these severely under-privileged children a renewed sense of self-worth, simply through letting them know that He loves them. In the orphanage, in the 4 churches we visited, out on the streets at night, and even in the hotel during 'test' trials, God never failed to impress me on how much He loved the little ones, and how much these poor children needed him.





Before hearing of his love, some children compared themselves to T-shirts with a hole over where the heart was, but after, they could compare themselves to a patched-up T-shirt, because they could feel love again.



Some changed their mental schemas from dead trees, to living flourishing ones brimming with hope and life. Others from rocks that wanted to hurt those who hit them, to sponges that comforted all who touched them. All it took was 2 carefully selected bible stories, beautifully illustrated by the 'green bag' materials.

Some of us went there to teach them of God's love. Others went there to further their relationship with God. But He used us in a far different way than we would have taught possible. Even while we stepped in at the 'Papa John' orphanage to teach them about

Love, Word, Hope and Prayer, they began showing us how it was done. Even as some of us were seeking God, He used us to let the children see Him.

Even in the heart of poverty at places like the Payatas dump site, where it was hard to imagine people living in, there were churches and men and women who gave their lives to work amongst them. Even as we pitied them for being financially impoverished, they showed us how spiritually impoverished we were. Even as we thought we didn't know how to pray for them, they showed us that they put their trust in Jehovah Jireh in a way far more real than most of us would have though practical or possible.





Sometimes I think God used us to give food, other times it was school supplies or maybe teaching them Prayer and Word. But the truth was far different. One little boy, who dragged one of us aside, enlightened us: “you are my Singapore”. You are my Singapore. To them, we were people willing to go all the way, albeit for a short time to visit them, and show them

God loved them. And that made all the difference.

We want to give all the praise and glory to God that during this trip 102 children responded at the party, 98 children responded at the 2 services at Payatas and a total of 27 children were reached during the Night ministry. We thank God for the fantastic turnout of 112 children at the party (not more than the amount of food we catered for, and yet not much less that anything went to waste).

**Samuel (Team Leader):** *"I learn about Christ-like love for others. While it's easy to love street children, which are only part of an event in my life, I believe the greater challenge is to continue to show Christ-like love in the people I meet everyday in my normal life"*

**Gracia (Assistant TL):** *"His awesomeness... the greatness of His majesty, supremacy of His will." ----- lessons learnt*

We took a photo of an unknown girl staring into a dark, dirty and smelly market. After taking this photo, we were told off by the security guard, fearing that we would use this photo deceitfully to raise ‘donations’ overseas. However, some of us will always remember the way she shyly smiled beautifully at us. Now, I wish we could have done more than smile back. That’s all we did, for her.





# Lam's Latest

Jun 2005

Dear precious partners,

Thank you to some of you who have asked whether we are moving or have moved to KL. It was a hard decision to make, we made ourselves open in spite of many factors to consider and at the end, the pillar of cloud that we thought was moving stayed and so we are still staying at Cloud Estate. Thank you for praying with us. It was not an easy time to live in the "maybe"!

*In the months of busyness and unsettledness we had a hard time coming up with a newsletter. The 2 computer's hard disks failing one after another compounded to the situation; the updated names and addresses database was lost. Recently Jenny found a poster which aptly says "To err is human but to really fouls up things requires a computer"! Thank you for praying for in spite of our silence!*

*Praise God the OCZ004 ran smoothly in July last year. Participants from 7 countries formed into teams and had a practical ministry in 4 countries. Some of the participant's comments are:*

*"The title was 'Out of Comfort Zone' and the Lord led me to a mission adventure out from my comfort zone."*

*"I learnt that God loves me, that He has a plan for the world; and I want to be part of His plan for the people who don't know Jesus"*

***OCZ005 is due to happen from 9-31 July 2005 in Sabah. Please pray for participants who have registered and all those involved***

*Last August we again had a beneficial time of team retreat, this time in an island in Sabah. During this retreat the team members from different parts of the country got to know one another better which helps in team building. Since the retreat the team have again changed, some left and one joined. So we get together again this August.*

*At the end of 2004 we shifted back to our home when Jenny's brother and family moved back to Kuching. It was luxury again for JD (or us who have to drive?) when he just has to walk to school when school reopened in January. Praise God both of them are enjoying school.*

And now  
you are  
living  
stones  
that are  
being used  
to build a  
spiritual  
house. You  
are also a  
group of  
holy  
priests,  
and with  
the help  
of Jesus  
Christ you  
will offer  
sacrifices  
that  
please  
God.

I Peter 2:5 CEV

The first three months of 2005, Jerry had travelled less than last year. In Feb, we hosted a Korean church team for their mission exposure to Borneo for about a week. The team were divided into two teams where our ex co-worker lead a team and Jerry lead one. Both teams have been blessed with stretching in the faith and also their lives.

Praise the Lord we are in the process of seeing 3 going to North Africa for a period of 2 weeks to 1 year. **Pray for them as they prepare themselves in these months.**

### Pray for us

- in our present ministry and as we seek His face concerning the future.
- good health for all of us.
- for Jerry as he co-ordinates accommodation & secures details during the OCZ005 conference and thereafter leads a team to the interior of Sabah. Jenny & kids will stay back in Kuching during this time. (school term)



Thankful for  
your  
partnership,

**Jerry, Jenny,  
Jedidiah & Jegwyn**

# Bowling 2005



Top Scorer

Men: **Teck Chye**

Women: **Swee Eng**





盲人福音事工  
**Gospel Mission To The Blind Ltd**

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ROC No: 198400544-Z Email: mission@gmb.com.sg

Jurong Christian Church  
2 Tah Ching Road  
Singapore 618744

June 2005

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ

Rejoice with us that on 14th May,

**Serene Tan** prayed to receive salvation. Please pray for her spiritual growth.

*Luke 15:7 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.*

On 29th May, I had the opportunity to share my testimony at an outreach programme of the Chinese Congregation of Barker Road Methodist Church, and two China ladies prayed to receive salvation.

In spite of losing both her legs, **Alice Neo** is still strong in her faith. Rejoice with her that her husband, **Mr Chew** will be baptized on 25th June. Please continue to pray for her health, especially that she will not have to go for further amputation; her 4th finger on her right hand has gangrene. Pray that her maid will serve her with a willing heart and not cause stress to her.

Please pray for **Goh Ming Kwang** whose health has been deteriorating. Pray that he will stop entertaining suicidal thoughts. Pray that his family members will forgive him, and visit him.

23 blind persons from our Chinese fellowship have signed up for the outing to the Bird Park on 22nd June. Please pray for fine weather for that day, and that even without sight, we will be able to enjoy the beauty of God's creation.

Please pray for a good response from our English fellowship for our tandem cycling and barbecue on 23rd July, and a camp for the youth and children on 22 - 24 July. Pray that the Lord will bless us with energetic sighted brothers to come and help us at the camp.

26 blind persons have signed up for the combined camp in September. We have booked 50 places for the camp. We will also be celebrating GMB's 25th anniversary at the camp. Pray that God's special favour and grace will continue to be upon GMB.

Thank you for your financial support to GMB. May you continue to experience the loving kindness of the Lord, and may His peace be upon you.

Yours in our Father's service,

Cheng Choo

## **ANOTHER LETTER FROM GMB DATED 9<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2005**

Luke 24:30-31 "When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him."

Dear Praying Friends,

Cleopas and his friend were very downcast as they walked to Emmaus. They were feeling very depressed because they could not bear with the loss of their Lord, and could not recognize Him when He walked with them and talked with them on the road.

People who lose their sight during adulthood also tend to sink into deep depression. Pray with us that they will not imprison themselves at home, but that they will embark on a journey whereby they will encounter the Lord, and have their eyes opened to see the Lord, who alone can drive away their depression and fill their hearts with hope and joy.

Mr Sim, (a staunch Buddhist), had recently lost his sight. Pray that Chee Kong will find favour with him and be empowered by the Holy Spirit to minister to him. During his first visit to Mr Sim on 6th July, Chee Kong found him very zealous in promoting his religion. Let's pray for the miracle of salvation upon this man, and that very soon he will become a powerful and zealous preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ instead.

On 6th July, Chee Kong also visited another new contact, Philip Sun, an alert elderly blind man who is selling lottery tickets. He came to our fellowship meeting today. Pray that he will soon be transformed by the Word and Power of God, and give up on selling these tickets. Please pray that the other blind people here will not be tempted to buy the lottery tickets from him. Some of our people have yet to overcome their gambling habit.

To date 45 persons have signed up for our camp in September. Please pray for Paul Yuen who will be delivering the messages in English and Daniel Foo who will be speaking to the Chinese group.

21 persons have signed up for our youth/children camp in July. Please pray for David Leong and myself who will be speaking at the camp. Pray also for fine weather on 23<sup>rd</sup> July so that the group can enjoy the tandem cycling and barbecue.

Pray that all who have signed up for the abovementioned events will not withdraw at the last minute.

Lastly, we thank you for your partnership and prayer support. May your eyes be opened to see His glory and beauty too.

Yours in our Father's service,

Cheng Choo  
Gospel Mission to the Blind Ltd  
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## **The Harvest in Australia is INDEED Plentiful!**

**“FEEL SAD YOU ARE GOING, MY COMPUTER NEARLY FIXED AS WELL AS ESSAY AND I WANT TO LET YOU KNOW THAT I AM WILLING TO BE A CHRISTIAN NOW, ACTUALLY I ALREADY PRAYED. I WISH ALL YOU GUYS GOOD LUCK! KEEP IN TOUCH.”**

- an SMS from Olivia, a mainland Chinese Monash University student, to Hung Peng, SCCC staff on the day we returned to Singapore

**Most people think we should head for third world countries for mission trips, but God has shown us during our 20-day stay in Melbourne that people, regardless of their status and education, need to know the Living God! Below are some highlights of our trip!**

### **26 April 05 - High Visibility Event**

Set up a booth on Monash Campus and served free kaya toast and home baked brownies to attract International Students (IS). The purpose was to help generate contacts. God is good! He brought more than 150 students to us through that event! Through the surveys, we came to know more about their spiritual beliefs. We then contacted them to befriend and share the gospel with them.

### **27 April & 04 May 05 - Student Life Live! Meetings**

Held 2 Student Life Live! Meetings for the IS. At these meetings we played games, had interactive discussions on life issues like friendships and worries, and shared with them the Biblical perspectives on these issues.

Our team was greatly encouraged when these students turned up for our events just as they had promised! Because the Bible says, “seek and you shall find”, we believe that with their open & receptive hearts, they will see the Light one day! Chen Hao, a

China International Student at Monash, commented in the response slip that he enjoyed the meeting and found it interesting!



A Muslim PhD student from Bangladesh, found the meeting interesting and indicated an interest to join a small Bible study group.



## 29 April 05 - Hospitality Night

28 IS visited our home at Glen Waverley. We played ice-breakers and had pizzas, cocktails and tidbits to make them feel welcomed! It was a wonderful evening for knowing our IS contacts on a more personal level. We understood their feelings of loneliness when away from home. That's why we shared with them that we care and love them!



Games and fun aside, more importantly, we wanted the IS to know the Good News of Jesus Christ and to bring it back to their homeland. We also showed the JESUS Film that night. Most IS, especially students from China, have little exposure to Christianity. Our brother, Joshua Tay also shared his testimony to the crowd, on how Jesus cured him of his illness. We marveled in awe of God as we heard some of the IS praying aloud as Winnie led in a prayer of faith to receive Christ.



No. of International Students (IS) who prayed & received Christ 11

Check out our team blog for more interesting stories of our trip.

<http://gen12ii-australiateam2005.blogspot.com/>

No. of IS who joined us for one-to-one evangelistic bible study 13

No. of 4 Spiritual Laws booklets shared 71

No. of outreach events held 4

No. of IS who watched JESUS Film during Hospitality Night 28



We reached IS from...  
Indonesia, China, Malaysia,  
Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand,  
Japan, Bangladesh, Taiwan,  
Macau, Hong Kong, India,  
Africa etc.

## Here's what some of our mission trippers have to say:

*"I am most thankful to God for sustaining me through this project. It was amazing that my old knee injury did not give me any problems while I was there. It was also very endearing to know that He had helped me to adjust to my role as a team leader. It was wonderful experiencing the love and grace shared by our team." -*

**June Chin, Team Leader**

*"The most significant moment on the project was the moment Peter, a Masters student, received Christ. There is nothing greater than when one person makes Christ Jesus his Lord and Saviour. All the angels will praise the Lord and rejoice." -*

**Joshua Lim, Food and Accommodation I/C**

*"I've seen myself growing in the area of taking faith steps to trust God to share Christ with strangers, despite fear inside me. I've learnt to commit my apprehensions to God and I firmly believe that He will see me through any circumstance, guiding and leading me." -*

**Yeo Zheng Lin, Logistics I/C**

*"The area in my life where I saw the greatest change was the Christ-given courage I now have to approach people to share the Gospel with them." -*

**Joshua Tay, Programme I/C**



### *Our typical day:*

- 1) *We conducted surveys*
- 2) *We built friendships with students*
- 3) *We shared the gospel*
- 4) *We followed-up the contacts*
- 5) *We conducted Evangelistic Bible Studies*
- 6) *We met nightly for prayer, praise and debrief*



We thank God for your financial and prayer support for this project. We believe all your contributions have made a difference in God's kingdom!

God has not only used us to help pioneer the International Student Ministry in Monash University, but also shown us that the harvest is indeed plentiful but workers are few (Matthew 9: 37)



# ANGER

(A brief, incomplete topical Bible Study)



Anger is variously defined as follows:

*Webster Dictionary - A feeling of displeasure resulting from injury, mistreatment, opposition, etc, usually showing itself in a desire to fight back at the supposed cause of this feeling.*

*Random House Dictionary - A strong feeling of displeasure and belligerence aroused by a real or supposed wrong.*

From the above and other definitions, a few key points about anger can be identified; viz

- i. It is a feeling of displeasure
- ii. It has an external cause or provocation (injury, wrong-doing, etc)
- iii. The object of provocation may be actually present (real) or imagined (supposed).

Carnal man when angry tends to blame the cause of anger rather than blame himself for succumbing to temptations (James 1:14). It would appear that he has 'good' arguments if there is a real provocation; but more often than not the cause is merely a figment of his imagination to justify his intemperance.

A reading through Scripture reveals that there are occasions and circumstances under which anger may be justified. Examples are:

- i. The anger of Moses (Ex 32:19ff)
- ii. The anger of Jesus (Mk 3: 5, Matt 21:12)
- iii. The anger of God (Ps 7:11)

Eph 4:26 implies that we may be angry so long as we do not sin. Jesus himself in Matt 5:22 (KJV) said that "whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment..." Here the decisive factor against anger is whether or not there is a (reasonable) cause for it. In other words, one may be angry with his brother only if he is justified by a cause.

Notwithstanding the above citations of circumstantial justification for anger, there are also numerous scriptural warnings against anger. Significantly, I note that in many of those direct exhortations against anger, they appear on the

surface not to be absolute without provision for exceptions. These are consolidated as follows:

Scripture Verse	Remarks
Prov. 12:16 "A <u>fool's wrath</u> is presently known: but ... (Also Prov. 27:3)	This regards only a <u>fool's wrath</u> ; it does not suggest a total condemnation of all types of wrath, including righteous wrath.
Prov. 14:17 "He that is <u>soon angry</u> dealeth foolishly: and..." (Also Ec 7:9, Prov 14:29; 16:32; 19:11)	Here again it is a discouragement of <u>quick anger</u> only; against anyone quick to anger (soon angry) without forethought of cool reasoning whereby he is led into sin (or foolish dealings!)
Prov. 19:19 "A man of <u>great wrath</u> shall suffer punishment: for ..."	This verse warns of punishment for great wrath, not all wraths; great wrath here plausibly refers to quick uncontrolled outburst of anger and not righteous anger that is with temperance.
Eph 4:26 "Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:"	One may be angry so long as the anger does not lead him into sinful end.

In the light of the scriptural assessment in the above discourse, Prov. 19:22 and James 1:20 may be seen as warnings against the ill product of anger rather than anger per se. The following are some significant points worth thinking about: -

1. A distinction has to be made between God's anger and human anger. God, being holy, may be justified in his righteous indignation at man's sinfulness; and thereby exercise judgment yet not sin. Likewise, it is true of Christ during his walk in this world; He was no ordinary man in the sense of being with a perfect God-nature and capable of perfect discernment between good and evil. Man however, when angry is invariably tempted to vengeance whereby the emotional pre-occupation so hard to contain naturally leads him into sin. It is thus true to say that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God," (Ja. 1:20) and hence "an angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression." (Prov. 29:22)
2. Man may be angry so long as he does not sin (Eph. 4:26), but since he invariably finds it extremely difficult (or 'impossible') to forestall the enticement of his flesh when angry, it is only logical that he should try to

avoid anger and thereby uproot a potent cause of sin. When anyone is offended, it is his glory to pass over a transgression and defers his anger (Prov 19:11)

3. Because of the basic weakness of the flesh, we often find ourselves succumbing to the temptation of anger. If anyone claims his anger to be righteous anger (the cause mentioned in Matt. 5:22 refers to reasonable cause, not frivolous excuse), then the anger must necessarily be directed against objects of unrighteousness (e.g. sinful conduct) and not against persons, for we are to love even our enemies (Matt. 5:44) and love worketh no ill to his neighbor (Rom. 13:10). All have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3: 23), even ourselves; so if we do not expect others to condemn (or perhaps excommunicate) us for our transgressions, let's also forgive others for whatever wrong they do to us, and win them over by our good witness unto Christ. He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail (Prov. 22:8)
4. Ec. 7:9 and various verses in Proverbs (14:17, 29; 16:32; 19:11) exhort us to be slow to anger. This slowness to anger if constantly practised and improved upon will ultimately remove our spirit of anger altogether.
5. Unless we abide in Christ and He in us (Jn 15:4), we cannot overcome anger. Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me, ye can do nothing." (Jn 15:5)

## *Personal Reflection*

Admittedly, I am not a saint; and from time to time, I do feel irritated by sight of injustices, children's disobedience, etc. As I do the Bible Study, I realize how bad I am in my capability to curb my negative feelings. However, I tell myself that it is pointless to make a guilt trip that leads to misery. What I do is to make effort to stretch the time between two consecutive occasions of anger so that in course of time I shall be better and better able to slow down my spirit of anger.

### How about you?

If you never ever become angry, being always as cool as a cucumber as some people seem to be in my eyes, then it would be great for you to share your secret of how you manage to do so. If on the other hand, you are just as 'ordinary'



as your neighbour in showing your temper from time to time, do not be tormented by guilt. Try harder next time to be on greater guard. In this way, the time gap between cause and effect of the temper display will tend to increase and in due course you may find a physical benefit in a greater resistance to high blood pressure. ☺

### Further Bible Study

The above is a brief, incomplete Bible study. You may wish to do further study on the subject by exploring the different types of anger you read about in the Bible. Here is a guide to some Greek words (transliterated) to start you off on your exploration:

*orge* – Intense anger that is a reaction against sin and wrongdoing. Righteous indignation over sinful behaviour. E.g. Mk 3:5; Eph 4:26a

*parogismis* – Translated as ‘wrath’ in Eph 4:26b (KJV). Bitter annoyance and enragement. It is wrong, so do not let the sun go down on this.

*thumos* – Boiling agitation or outburst. Eph 4:31, translated as ‘wrath’ in KJV and ‘rage’ in NIV. Obviously wrong, to be put away with all malice.

**John Lee**

## 38th Anniversary Celebration

A buffet lunch was organized at Boon Lay Raja Restaurant on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2005.



# The Left Hand Rule of God

*By Rev. Soh Guan Keng,  
Queenstown Lutheran Church*

The poor widow with only 2 coins GAVE her 2 coins to God - she is a testimony of giving more than an illustration of the fact that there are poor people in the church who are paid much less than the Pastor.

The pertinent verses often cited to support giving pastors their salary are from 1 Timothy 5:17-18, and they in fact speak of "double honour" and proper wages. But the Pastor cannot simply be equated with a CEO with KPIs! He is not an income generator and profit driven. The Pastor is the minister of the Word and Sacraments, to which profit and monetary values cannot be ascribed!

In other words, that "balance" will be hard to find, especially if you want to satisfy people's opinions and find a monetary value for a spiritual ministry. A worker "living from the Gospel" is the one who speaks the Word upon which the life of a church is dependent. A congregation rooted in Christ's love, and seeking a person beyond reproach to be their Pastor, should be happy and privileged to pay their Pastor well, whether they are rich or poor.

I think that a Pastor should be paid what is necessary for him and his family to live comfortably in his country, carry out the requirements of his ministry effectively, without his ministry having to be hindered by financial worry, and to limit temptations of too much or too little. His qualifications, and how they are remunerated in a certain country, should also be considered. Average wages of teachers, or perhaps executives of non-profit organizations (NKF is an exception) could serve as guides. Fixed salaries with annual increments, and wage supplements as guided by a country's wage policy are what I favour - not percentages of the offering or increments/deductions tied to church growth. I also think that denominational guidelines are important to ensure transparency.

The church belongs to God's right-hand rule, in its mission to preach the Gospel. But because a church is also an organization, some principles of

God's left-hand kingdom may be helpful - a reasonable wage, guided by the average income of other professions in with related fields (i.e. fields which also involve teaching, welfare, counselling, charitable works and organizations, community service, etc.) and the provisions of all wage policies of the government, can serve as guides.

I think our LCS Pastor's Salary Policy and scale, which I have heard is pegged to teachers' and also guided by other mainline denominations' salaries, is a good one (*Teacher's salaries were constantly revised upwards, but pastors' salaries are still more or less the same*).

These thoughts are of the wages per se. Whether a Pastor lives in a condo, drives what car, etc. is not considered. There may 1001 reasons why a Pastor lives in a condo and drives a fancy car - he may have rich parents! Having said that, a Pastor should be careful not to lose his credibility as a preacher of the word and minister of God's love. He does not have to be poor, and he probably does not have to apologise for his salary. After all, I think Abraham was rich, probably so was Matthew, and Paul did have his own sources of income. But he should be careful not to be a poor steward of his riches - which is more the issue rather than whether he lives in luxury or not.

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## **A QUICK GETAWAY TO TIARA BEACH RESORT, PORT DICKSON 9-10 JULY**

Ten members of Jurong West CG squeezed into 2 cars and drove 750 km to PD and back, staying 1 night at the resort. It was a good time of bonding and getting to know each other's idiosyncrasies better.

The resort was a letdown because of the long queues to check in. Took us almost an hour to check in.

Mr Kong was a good guide and we managed to visit Lukut, Pasir Panjang and other places of interest for shopping and eating. Join us the next trip.



*Recently there were many reports of healthy young men suddenly dying after exercises. This article is not about how regrettably some of them were probably non-Christians and may not have heard of the Gospel. Neither is this article about how we may have let an opportunity slip by because we think that there are many opportunities to reach people with the Gospel at some later date when it is more convenient for us. Rather, this article is an extract from the Internet, which may give a clue to why all these sudden deaths and also advise on how to avoid the pitfalls.*

## **Are you drinking too much water?**

by Dr. Sarah Brewer

The answer is probably no. Yet recent media reports of water intoxication have left many confused over how much water they should be drinking a day. Dr Sarah Brewer advises on how to keep your fluid intake healthy



Water is more important to our health than most people realise. During an averagely active day in a temperate climate such as the UK, we lose around 2.5 litres of fluid from our body, either through the lungs as water vapour, through the skin as sweat, or through the kidneys as urine. A small amount is also lost through the bowels. If you take vigorous exercise or visit a hot country, it is easy to lose twice this amount. Athletes in hot climates may lose as much as 10 litres of fluid per day.

The body normally maintains a fine fluid balance. As long as we replace our daily water losses through adequate drinking and eating, excess fluid passes into your circulation and is usually filtered out by the kidneys. If you are slightly dehydrated, you will pass less urine than normal. This is because your body will carefully conserve its water stores and also trigger sensations of thirst.

Ideally, we need to drink at least two litres (eight glasses) of pure water per day, in addition to other fluids, such as alcohol, tea, coffee and soft drinks. Children should drink approximately half this amount, depending on their age. Although we should ideally drink at least eight glasses of water a day, only 10% do so. Over

half the population only drink between one and four glasses of water a day, and this can lead to dehydration.

Dehydration is a common cause of tiredness, poor concentration, reduced alertness, recurrent headaches and mood changes. It can also lead to constipation, kidney stones, and even a blood clot, heart attack or stroke, as it increases the thickness and stickiness of blood.

It's important to not wait until you feel thirsty, as thirst receptors are a poor judge of how fluid deficient you are, and you are already significantly dehydrated the time you feel a craving to drink. Aim to drink fluids regularly throughout the day rather than just drinking when you feel thirsty.

High temperatures can quickly lead to dehydration, so drink plenty of water in summer months or when visiting hot climates. If exposure to heat is excessive, it can also lead to heat stroke - this is because increased humidity stops sweat evaporating from the skin to cool the body. To help prevent this, acclimatise yourself to hot weather slowly by spending gradually longer periods of time in the heat, before returning to cooler shade - full acclimatisation can take up to three weeks. Avoid strenuous exercise, wear loose, lightweight clothes, and drink plenty of fluids. Cool off in a shower whenever possible.

However, even water intake requires moderation: recent media reports have focused on people who have drunk too much water, which can overwhelm the kidneys and lead to swelling of the brain. Water intoxication can cause symptoms of headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion and, in extreme cases, can lead to coma and death, although this is rare. Certain drugs, including illegal ones such as ecstasy, can trigger drinking excessive amounts of water. It can also be caused by health conditions that affect water balance, such as kidney failure, liver cirrhosis, and uncontrolled diabetes. Drinking excessive amounts of water can also have a psychological cause when it is known as psychogenic polydipsia.

Most people will come to no harm if they stick to drinking two to three litres of fluid per day. If you are concerned about your fluid intake, seek medical advice.

#### Editor's Note:

*Too much of a good thing, even water, can be harmful. In a bathtub, it can be nice and comfortable but in the middle of the ocean, it can drown you. A glass of beer is reputed to be good for you but more than two glasses may cause you your driving license.*



# BB BIBLE QUIZ

On 2 July 2005, 28<sup>th</sup> BB Company sent two teams to take part in the National Juniors Bible Quiz Competition held at Paya Lebar Methodist Church. This year the quiz is based on the Book of Joshua chapters 1 to 11 and Jesus' miracles in the Gospel of John. The competition has 6 stations in total. At Station number 1, participants were to answer 20 MCQ & 5 True/False questions individually. The rest of the other 5 stations, we were tested as a team effort.

Word Search was Station number 2. We got to find words relating to Jesus' miracles. After finding them, our team leader recorded it on a given answer sheet. We found words like fish, wine, Capernaum.

3rd station was Cross Word Puzzle. We were given some scrabble chips and we had to pick the scrabble chips to put on the puzzle. The puzzles were from Joshua & Jesus' miracles.

4<sup>th</sup> station was Win, Lose or Draw. One of our team members drew pictures from a verse and the rest of us guessed the verse. We got 6 out of 10 verses correct.

5th station was Charades. The charades were tough; it took us a while to guess out the verse. The longest verse contained 18 words.

The last station was Mix & Match. This station was fun. 2 of the team members searched for verses from a box that contained scraped papers and Bible verses, they passed the verses to 2 runners, the runners will take the verse and ran to the end point for our team leader to arrange the Bible verse. The verse was from Joshua 1: 9 *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."*

The competition took 3 hours. After the competition we went back to the Chapel to watch a magic show while the committee finalized the results. A total of 49 teams took part in this year's Quiz competition. The top 10 companies received prizes from the Guest of Honor. We got very anxious and worried when it came to the top 3 placings. When the officer announced that the Champion was 28<sup>th</sup> BB, we were shocked but very happy. Each of the team members got to receive a gift, and then we were presented with a plaque and a big trophy.

I thank God for helping me to know the Bible better through the quiz and the fun I enjoyed in participating in Quiz. I looked forward to represent my company again for next year's Bible quiz.

**Samuel Chong**  
28<sup>th</sup> BB