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SEEKING GOD'S FACE

by Bryan Tay



PROJECT BEFRIENDERS

by John Lee



PRAYER FIRST

by Rev Fredric Lee



The Vine This Month
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HOM Editorial

In the last issue, I mentioned about End Times and here is an extract from Beliefnet.com about the “mark of the beast” or the number 666 which many consider to be the devil’s number.

Revelation 13:15-18 says, “*And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, (Tattoo, barcode, RFID??) so that no one can buy or sell (Cashless transactions??) unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. This calls for wisdom: let the one who has*

understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.”

So what exactly is the mark? The mark of the beast acts as a seal for the followers of Antichrist and the false prophet who serves the Antichrist. The false prophet is the one who causes people to take this mark.

This mark is placed directly on the hand or forehead. It’s not a card that is simply carried around. Author Lesli White claims that a medical implant chip isn’t the mark of the beast. The mark of the beast will be something only given to those who worship the Antichrist.

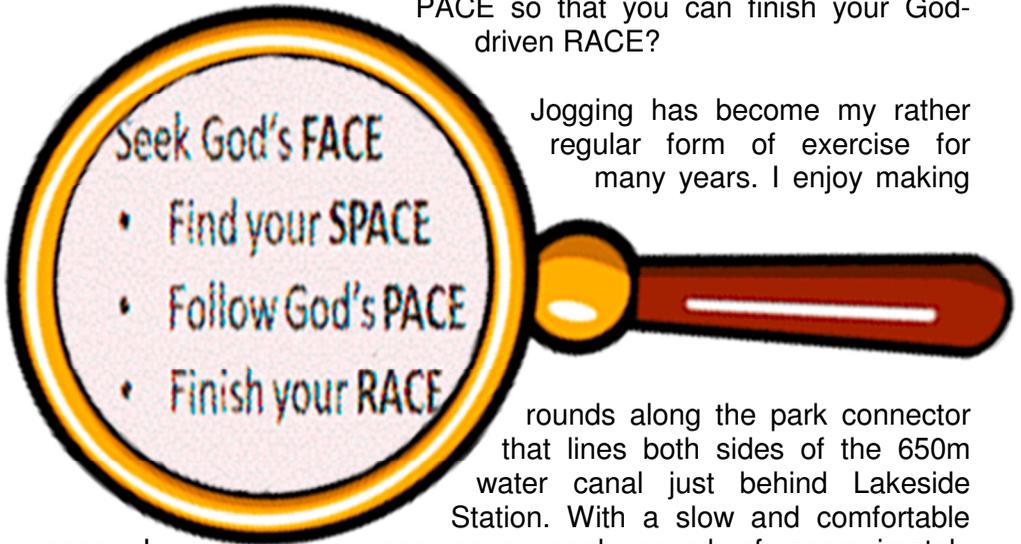
There is a website (antichristcalculator.tripod.com) which proposes a formula to calculate what names will result in 666, using A=6, B=12, C=18,,,,,,Z=156, each alphabet is in multiples of 6. You can use Excel vlookup formula to calculate that “Mark of Beast” = 666 and “RFID Scanner” also = 666. However from what I understand, the 666 refers to the name of a person.

Revelations 14:1 - *Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads.*

You either have God’s name or the beast on your forehead.

Martin Cheah

Are you seeking God's FACE to find your SPACE and follow God's PACE so that you can finish your God-driven RACE?



Jogging has become my rather regular form of exercise for many years. I enjoy making

rounds along the park connector that lines both sides of the 650m water canal just behind Lakeside Station. With a slow and comfortable

pace, I can cover each round of approximately 1.3km in less than 11 minutes.

For some reason, I had always treated my mostly evening jogs as fat-burning times or idea-generating periods for my work projects. On good days, with a constant pace, sufficient energy and focused mind (with work!), I would cover at least 4km quite easily. At other times, with tired legs, a weary mind and flagging zeal, I would end up doing less than 3km, sometimes resorting to the walk-a-jog mode just to satisfy myself that I completed the intended distance.

After each jog, while cooling down, I would thank God for giving me strength and discipline to complete the distance. And after crossing the finishing line each time, I would be reminded of this scripture:

1 Tim: 4:8 *"For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."*

This evening's jog was no different. Yet somehow, I was still trying to draw a lesson from this exercise. A parallel of sorts between my Christian life and the satisfying jog, as the scripture says.

Somehow, my thoughts quickly converged towards the word RACE. Once that happened, the rest of my thoughts fell into place.

I would like to encourage all of us with this short exhortation.

1. *A race is run within a defined SPACE*

There is also a specific distance to cover. The 100m sprint is run along the straight home stretch of a 400m stadium. A marathon route is defined within a given geographical space. For some of us, God has defined a longer distance in a bigger space. For others, a shorter one in a smaller space but nonetheless a fruitful and complete race in the sight of God.

From the scripture below, we know that Jesus is coming back and expecting to see the harvest that we have brought about in our God-assigned SPACE.

Mark 12:1-2 *"Jesus then began to speak to them in parables: 'A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard.'"*

Reflection:

Where is your SPACE?

Is it your home, where you need to take care of family? Is it industry, where you can shine for Jesus?

2. A race is run with a planned PACE

To complete a race within a set time or to win it, we need to have a planned PACE. It cannot be left to chance. In this regard, I thank God that we are not left to fend for ourselves. For oftentimes, our spirit is willing but our flesh is weak.

Psalm 32:8 *"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you."*

God has promised to lead us with His PACE. We simply need to seek His counsel and follow His lead. He speaks through the Bible. He speaks through His Holy Spirit who teaches us all things. He speaks through Providence. He can even speak with His audible voice!

Reflection:

How has God been speaking to you? He is dictating His PACE. What are you doing about it? Let us take stock. If we are falling behind, let us determine to keep up with God's PACE. He makes all things beautiful in His time.

3. A RACE is meant to be completed

God has created us and redeemed us for a purpose. He made each of us unique and gave us gifts to contribute to His Kingdom work. He has called us and hence expects us to complete the race and win the prize of our calling.

1 Cor 9:24 *"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to **get the prize.**"*

We are not competing with other Christians. We are competing against ourselves, against the extent to which we have obeyed God's calling and done what He is guiding us to do daily.

Heb 12:4 *"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so*

*easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the **race marked out for us.**"*

Reflection:

What is your calling? Are you planning to finish the race with a plan: Are you seeking God's **FACE** to find your **SPACE** and follow God's **PACE** so that you can finish your **RACE** with faithfulness, or are you still leaving it to chance and lethargy?

Let us unite our hearts and determine to live the abundant lives that our Lord Jesus has given to us, and in turn share it with others.

Bryan Tay



Despite the Circuit Breaker, the Chit-Chat Corner is still alive.

With the JCC worship service migrating online, the Chit-Chat Corner follows suit. The Outreach MLT is hosting the Chit-Chat online via Zoom every Sunday to welcome all new friends joining the JCC family and provide space for JCCians to have fellowship time together.

There are no physical handshakes, no coffee and tea; nevertheless, the warmth is discernible from the sharing and laughter as we meet one another face to face in the comfort of our homes.

One of the new friends we got to know is Glory, from QLC. She is a Filipino domestic helper, a pleasant lady who promised to sing us a Filipino song the following Sunday. We planned to have some light fun with a simple quiz with 3 questions and prizes to be given out when we next meet in church.

The lyrics of a hymn ring in my ears:

*Oh, God will make a way
Where there seems to be no way
He works in ways we cannot see
He will make a way for me*

Thank God that we are adaptable – because He is always with us as our guide in all circumstances.

Amen!

Peggy Tan

PROJECT BEFRIENDERS (S3P)



Time to say Goodbye, but ...

One of the callings of churches is to sow love and care in the community. This awesome calling is not lost on JCC in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. When we see people in need, it is natural for us to step forward to help in whatever ways we can.

Hence, we took up the PROJECT BEFRIENDERS in partnership with New Life Baptist Church (NLBC) Hearts Alive Church (HA) and Revival Christian Church (RCC) to provide **Safe, Sound Sleeping Places (S3P)** to one of community's vulnerable groups (the homeless people), making full use of the space we had upon the temporary closure of our kindergarten due to the government's Circuit Breaker measures.

It would be a lie to say that we didn't have our concerns about the adequacy of our ability to provide safe shelter and ensure the well-being of everyone with all the necessary challenging precautions to prevent the spread of the virus.

We did also think about how God had been blessing JCC through many tough challenges and were reminded by Scripture about putting faith into practice, conquering fear.

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." ~ [Isaiah 41:10](#)

FAITH OVER FEAR

RELIGION IN A TIME OF COVID -19

SAT 9:00 P.M. SIN 6:30 P.M. DEL 8:00 P.M. JKT

cna.asia/vod
cna.asia/youtube

“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.” ~

[Psalm 56:3](#)

With the Covid-19 stress everywhere, especially acutely

felt by the homeless, we finally took the leap of **FAITH OVER FEAR** on 20th April 2020 to be a blessing as we had been blessed, with our brother Justin Tay bravely leading the project.



When our work was featured in CNA 9.00 p.m. news on 30th May 2020 (Sat), one of our beneficiaries commented on TV: ***“My leg is not doing so well, but I’m living like an***

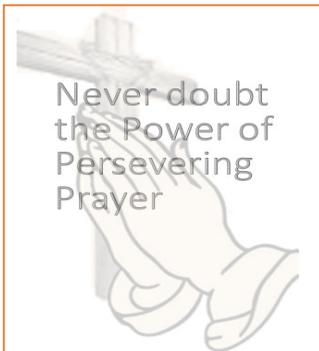
emperor.”

What? Living like an emperor? 😊 Of course, this cheerful uncle was using hyperbole. Nevertheless, he was obviously incredibly happy with the shelter and simple comforts that we were able to provide. His cheerfulness bounced back to us as we realised that it is like Jesus feeding 5000 with the little that His followers were able to provide; it is really not how little or much we can muster in terms of our perceived capability, but how we can show compassion to the needy with the sustenance of God.

With the Circuit Breaker being lifted, we bade farewell to the ten guests that we were glad to host under the BEFRIENDERS PROJECT (S3P). They were satisfied with the simple help we were privileged to provide, and we felt blessed with the opportunity to experience faith at work in a real-life setting, trusting God in sowing love and care under challenging circumstances.

Time to say Goodbye, but ...

We continue to keep our beneficiaries in our prayers – praying for their salvation and wishing them well with God’s blessings. In fact, we are still in contact with some of them even though they are no longer in JCC. One of them keeps mentioning that JCC is the “best of all best” among the places that he had been to. We are happy when we see our beneficiaries happy. With humility, we acknowledge with thanksgiving to God for His wonderful provisions. He has built JCC for His purpose.



At the same time, we also give thanks for the numerous brothers and sisters in Christ who stepped out of their comfort zone, taking the leap of **FAITH OVER FEAR** in rendering Godly service which we know they will continue in different ways.

We thank our prayer warriors who prayed daily from the start of this project till it ended. One of our beneficiaries received Christ on the day before he left JCC. It was amazing

how God surprised and encouraged us to press on in praying for the community.

Will JCCians rise up in praying – both individually and in cell groups – and be ready to yield a greater harvest?

John Lee



The Lord is risen and ascended to heaven. Alleluia!

For many people, they cannot wait for the Circuit Breaker to be over for them to do what they want to do. Is this period a waste of your time? For Christians, this is actually a God-given time for you:

- *to deepen your relationship with God, to grow deeper in your prayer life.*
- *to re-unite with the family of believers – it is precisely because of social distancing that we need to strengthen the unity in the community of brothers and sisters in-Christ.*
- *To be spiritually alert & prayerful – aware of our own weaknesses which the devil is exploiting, in such a time when we are prone to laze around, fall into temptations when we are alone and waste our time because we think we have plenty of it. It is precisely in such a situation when God shows us the areas where we need self-discipline and spiritual growth. God will reveal those areas when we come into His presence in prayer. Today's Scripture readings¹ give us insight of this spiritual practice of Jesus and His disciples.*

1) PRAYER: GOD'S WILL FIRST (JOHN 17:1-11)

¹ Acts 1:6-14; Ps 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Pet 4:12-14, 5:6-11; Jn 17:1-11

We hear in John's gospel Jesus praying before he was arrested, tortured and crucified. In such a critical moment, what was Jesus doing? He was praying. Indeed, it was because it was such a critical moment that Jesus was praying. What do you do in a crisis?

a) To know God's will:

Prayer is the first priority because we need to know that it is God's will before we take the next step. What is troubling you today? How are you going to face it? Coming to God in prayer can help us discern God's will.

Jesus prayed, "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." (Jn 17:1-3)

In His prayer, Jesus was crystal clear that He was doing the Father's will, to carry out the mission to give eternal life to all people. So, Jesus knew that the hour or time had come for His glorification when he would be lifted up and exalted on the cross. Then he would triumph over sin, death & the devil upon his resurrection and ascension.

When our prayers are being led by the Spirit, we will receive a confirmation in our hearts. We will sense a strong conviction to stop or a strong inspiration to take a step of faith. Will you seek God's will? Will you obey the prompting of the Spirit?

b) To do God's will:

To know God's will is one thing. To do God's will is another. And we can see Jesus' desire to do God's will in His prayer.

"I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do." (John 17:4)

He prayed for God's glory on earth by finishing the work the Father had given him.

Do you desire God's glory?

Jesus prayed that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven that the Father might be glorified. And since He knew God's will and desired to do God's will, the Father would surely answer in His favour. Jesus did God's will by finishing His work on earth to give eternal life to all people and bring glory to the Father.

How was Jesus able to pray such a God-centred prayer?

If you know that you will soon be arrested, tortured and crucified, how would you be feeling? Jesus did not raise any objection. He was in perfect submission to His Father's will. He possessed such fortitude in His heart by keeping a perfect relationship with His Father.

Listen to Jesus' prayer and we can sense this oneness in the relationship with His Father. What stand out are these phrases in which Jesus attributed to the Father everything that he had.

"those whom you gave me... They were yours; you gave them to me...everything you have given me comes from you. I gave them the word you gave me...I came from you...you sent me...I pray for them...those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine...protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me." (John 17:6-10a, 11b).

Jesus credited His success in His mission to the Father. This gives glory to the Father in their oneness in Jesus' mission.

If we want to be like Christ, to know God's will, and to have the desire to do God's will, then we have to have an intimate relationship with our Father because in Him we fulfill our calling and purpose in life.

This period of deprivation of leisure and social interaction is a God-given time to renew our relationship with our heavenly Father. To deepen our prayer life with the Lord. To enjoy the love of our Father. And you can begin today. God loves to welcome you into his presence.

To deepen your relationship with God you can do the following:

- Set up a Bible reading/listening plan. Have you tried setting a target of reading through the Bible?
- Scripture memory challenge. Do it with a friend.
- Meditating, praying the Scriptures.
- Journaling your prayer. You'll be amazed in seeing how God answers you.
- Sing/worship.

These are basic spiritual practices of discipleship. This year we want to strengthen our discipleship.

Let us look at the disciples after Jesus has ascended into heaven in Acts 1.

2) PRAYER: UNITY FIRST

What was the first thing the disciples did after Jesus' ascension?

- Did they prepare for the persecution that they would face? That was a real danger.
- Did they plan how to improve their financial situation? Wasn't money important?
- Did they discuss how to go about proclaiming the gospel? That was their mission, right?

- Did they debate about the baptism of the Holy Spirit or the charismatic gifts? Like what happened in the Corinthian Church that caused division and quarrel?

All these had the potential to cause disunity in the small early church and destroy it quickly. So, what did they do?

a) They all joined together constantly in prayer. (Acts 1:14)

They prayed. But it is how they prayed that matters.

b) All of them joined together – in unity (cf. Jn 17:11).

The wonderful truth about our unity is that Christ has united us in Him. In John 17:11 Jesus prayed for our unity. *“Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.”* Today Jesus continues His priestly ministry of praying for our unity. And we can be inspired that God the Father protects our unity in the power of Jesus’ name.

c) Who do you pray with?

Are you praying together with brothers and sisters perhaps once a week? Or once in 2 weeks? Once a month? If not, why?

What is preventing you from praying with brothers and sisters? And do not say it is the Circuit Breaker. Because that is not going to stop you if you really want to contact someone to pray. Even if we cannot come together in one place, we can join in praying together. When there is a will there is a way to overcome problems. And I do not mean just pray with your family at home, but also pray with and for the family of believers in JCC. How can you be praying together for one another?

I want to encourage everyone to get yourselves into prayer groups of 3s or 4s. I thank God for the prayer group that was

started by Abundance CG that included Dorothy & me. We are encouraged by the prayers. I encourage Cell Groups & ministry groups to form prayer groups to pray for one another and the Church. I am also in a small prayer group of pastors. The greatest joy is to experience the grace of God in answering so many prayers. Do not deprive yourselves of this joy!

Praying with brothers and sisters is a mark of discipleship.

We not only need to pray with one another; we also need to pray for one another. Because the church is under threat from the devil and the world.

3) PRAYER: BE ALERT AND SOBER FIRST (1 PETER 4:7; 5:8)

The Apostle Peter said, *“Be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith.”* (1 Peter 4:7; 5:8-9)

Be spiritually alert & prayerful.

Be alert to look out for what?

- ❖ The devil will deceive us into not doing God’s will.
- ❖ The devil will distract us so that we miss God’s divine opportunity to serve Him and bring Him glory.
- ❖ The devil will devour us by destroying our prayer life, making us think that we know enough, are capable enough and good enough.
- ❖ The devil will depress us by keeping us down with all our anxiety on our own shoulders.
- ❖ The devil will destroy our unity by buttering up our pride so that we do not submit to one another under the mighty hand of God.

Humble ourselves under God’s mighty hand and cast all our anxiety on him.

Doing so, we can turn our weaknesses into strength by God's grace and power.

Be aware of our own weaknesses which the devil is exploiting.

Heed Jesus' word to *"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."* (Mark 14:38)

Ask the Lord to show you the areas of your life that are under spiritual attack.

Ask the Lord to reveal where you are suffering emotionally – hurt, feeling guilty, or dealing with addiction.

Prayerfully open your life to the light of God. Bring your pain, your broken pieces in your life to the Lord, and let the His grace make you whole.

Then resist the devil, standing firm in the faith.

Trusting the Lord Jesus' mighty name that protects you. **And God by His grace *"will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."*** (1 Pet 5:10)

Ω



The world is a chaotic place short of able leadership but not short of warmongers. Peaceful coexistence is a dream, but even a hermit is hard put to find a haven.

The Bible tells us, "Do not love the world or anything in

the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them." – 1 John 2:15

The reason not to love the world or anything therein is given in the next verse: "**For** everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world." – 1 John 2:16

When we put away our tinted glasses and look at attitudes and behaviours, the presence of corrupt systems in the world is unmistakable. Hegemonic ambitions and vainglory-seeking push individualism against collectivism.

How does a drunk person behave? Well, he totters along, not aware of his words and actions. Then, with sober hindsight, he regrets his foolishness. Unfortunately, he may not recover from the damages he has caused to himself and others.

"The world is like a drunken peasant. If you lift him into the saddle on one side, he will fall off on the other side. One can't help him, no matter how one tries." – Martin Luther.

Since we cannot love the world, should we then abandon the world or escape from it? The answer is NO.

Some people use the Persian adage *“This too shall pass”* as an encourager to get through the difficulties they face in the world. We wish for the “drunken peasant” to sober up and turn to uprightness. However, the adage is also cautioning us not to take good fortunes for granted, as *“this too shall pass”*. There are many rags-to-riches stories as well as accounts of privileged people falling from grace.

As the “drunken peasant” swings between long inebriation and brief sobriety, with people on tenterhooks knowing not what to do about it, let us turn to the Bible for wisdom.

“This too shall pass” is not in the Bible. However, the Bible does tell us: *“The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.” – 1 John 2:17*

The Bible is telling us that the world and the lust of it is temporary, is passing away. This is different from saying that the world is going to change. “Passing away” means that it will become of no value in totality. **People therefore are better off pursuing that which is of eternal value, understanding what the Lord’s will is.**

Meanwhile, as we are in the world, we can be like the fish that lives in the salty world of the ocean and yet does not taste salty. Be like

 *Jesus Christ, Son of God, [Our] Saviour* – who stayed in the presence of sinners and interacted with them, yet was not affected by them, despite being criticized for it. “But wisdom is proved right by her deeds,” (Mt 11:19 NIV) which means that the proof of wisdom is in the actions it produces.

Sadly, humanity is short of wisdom to imbibe the biblical wisdom.

A Christian song carries this line: *“The world is not my home; I am just passing through ...”*

Albeit the world is not our home, we are staying in it – not by choice, not to avoid it, but with a mission:

- **Mt 28:19-20 (KJV1900)**

¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and **teach all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

- **Mt 28:19-20 (NKJV)**

¹⁹ Go therefore and **make disciples of all the nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.

1) Notice that in v.19, it is **“teach all nations”** in KJV1900 whereas it is **“make disciples of all nations”** in NKJV. I have checked more than 20 other English translations and found that the word “teach” is not in any of these translations after the KJV1900 – including ASV1901, ESV, NIV ...

2) Notice also that “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (v.20) comes after “baptizing them”. (v.19)



The two points above are significant. According to a Bible commentator²:

- 1) The form of the Greek verb in the verse means “to turn into disciples” and “does not indicate how disciples are to be made, it designates only an activity that will result in disciples. It connotes results not methods and ways. The translation ‘teach’ [as in KJV1900] is, therefore, unfortunate and even misleading.”
- 2) **“Those who draw the conclusion that we must always teach first and use this passage as proof against infant baptism are basing their conclusion on a mistranslation.”**

The worldwide scope of “all nations” where Christ-committed followers are to “go” calls for abundant teamwork and divisions of work in the body of Christ, because no individual has the myriad talents and infinite availability to be at every place doing everything.

Is there anyone in JCC who thinks that he can be a Billy Graham, a David Pawson, a Ravi Zacharias ...? Not everyone of us can be a full-time missionary, a pastor, a bible translator, an usher, a Sunday School teacher, a media technician ... These are different parts of the body doing different kinds of work, the sum of which supports the **WHOLE SPECTRUM OF SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY** producing the desired result of the Great Commission by versatile methods and ways.

The Great Commission is not a call for every Christian to leave his/her homeland. It is also not a call encouraging the situation with some “super-Christians” wearing manifold hats while some other Christians do nothing to contribute to the **WHOLE SPECTRUM OF SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY**.

- No Christian should be made to feel inferior as a small cog in the Great Commission wheel, because the rim of the wheel that

2

https://books.google.com.sg/books/about/The Interpretation of St Matthew s G ospe.html?id=nQ9rJ9bc83kC&redir_esc=y

rolls vibrantly on the mission ground (locally or overseas) may just go crashing without a small functioning cog.

- No Christian should see himself as unimportantly small with no useful Christian service to offer within the body of Christ, in frontline or supporting roles fulfilling the Great Commission.

Evangelism is about saving lives. To save someone from drowning, we should know ourselves well and not end up being dragged under. It is sad that drowning cases involving lifesavers as victims are not unheard



of. Therefore, for the sake of self-preservation, we also need to embrace **self-evangelisation** (targeting self with the spiritual reinforcement of constantly preaching the Gospel to ourselves) so that

we can more effectively evangelise “all nations” from a position of strength.

The instruction “SAVE YOURSELF FIRST ...” may sound awfully curt in encouraging self-centred behaviour that is out of place for a Christian. However, the justification for this very instruction on self-preservation in airline safety videos (“*Put your oxygen mask on first before ...*”) is clear to all. Now, it may sound more agreeable to the ears if the full instruction is presented like this: “SAVE YOURSELF FIRST AND THEN DO WELL TO SAVE OTHERS.”

You may suggest an improved phrasing of the instruction to minimise potential misunderstanding, to put across more effectively than I do the idea of self-evangelism to live out the Gospel as we tell others how to live out the Gospel:

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.” – Col 2:6-7

You may think that I am writing for your reading pleasure. In fact, before you have the chance to read this article, I have read it several times. So, what speaks outwards also speaks inwards. This is akin to the idea of self-evangelism whereby God’s servants who bear the Gospel message also gain from the returning echoes.

Serious challenges and hard obstacles abound in both outreach mission and self-directed evangelism. Admittedly, we are all in the sanctification process and are not perfected saints. Faithful Christians do feel humbled to be called “saints in Christ Jesus” (the term as used in Philippians 1:1 NKJV).

Thank God for His grace in equipping the “saints in Christ Jesus” to make use of opportunities, united in diverse talent contributions, for a singular goal of the Great Commission.

In the open season of harvest the opportunity for reaching out is also an opportunity for reaching inwards, to profit from the “mirror reflection” or echoes of the Gospel message that we share out. It is beneficial to be acutely aware of our own shortcomings and hence the ever-present need to avoid the incumbrance of pride and seek God’s grace on our path of sanctification in tandem with our riding of the Great Commission wheel, as we face up to a chaotic world with wars and rumours of wars.

We are in the world, but are we part of the world?

“Deceit is in the hearts of those who plot evil, but those who promote peace have joy. No harm overtakes the righteous, but the wicked have their fill of trouble.” – Prov 12:20-21

John Lee

By His wounds you were healed

*But He was pierced through for our **transgressions**,
He was crushed for our **iniquities**;
The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him
And by His scourging we are healed. Isaiah 53:5*

*and He Himself bore our **sins** in His body on the cross, so that we
might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were
healed. 1 Peter 2:24*

Did Jesus come into the world to suffer and die for our physical health? Many assume that the word healed refers to physical healing. However if we read the verse in context, the healing is for our sins of Transgressions (rebellion) and Iniquities (depravity).

Truly I believe God can heal us of our physical illnesses but He need not suffer and die to do it. In Matthew 8:8, "*The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. **But just say the word**, and my servant will be healed."*

God created the universe by His Word and He can certainly heal us by a word without having to die on the cross. "*Jesus reached out and touched him. "I am willing," he said. "**Be healed!**" And instantly the leprosy disappeared.*" Matthew 8:3

Thank God for His Love for us, "*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" Romans 5:8

"*Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.*" 3 John 1:2

Stay Saved, Stay Healthy, Stay in Christ.

Martin Cheah