



水湾之声

Ripples from the Bay

2018年7月份

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本堂主理 蔡伟山牧师

继续与和平使者耶稣同行

[与和平的使者耶稣同行]，这是本堂从2016年就开始推行的3年主题（2016-2018）。定下这个主题的目的是为了提醒会友看重属灵的生命，让大家不断地重温一直以来所领受过的教导与栽培；同时也藉此促进

本堂各事工之间的成员，大家都能够不分彼此，同心合一，在灵里互相配搭，共同推展教会的事工，扩展神的国度。

其实，上帝在基督里，已将“和平使者的职分”托付于我们；林后(5：18-20)如此说：

“一切都是出于神；他藉着基督使我们与他和好，又将劝人与他和好的职分赐给我们。这就是神在基督里，叫世人与自己和好，不将他们的过犯归到他们身上，并且将这和好的道理托付了他们。所以我们做基督的使者，就好像神借着我们劝你们一般。我们替基督求你们与神和好。”

这是神赐予我们的身份，也成了我们的使命！所以，[与耶稣同行]是我们一生的目标，也是一生的操练。

首先，我们需要看重在耶稣里恢复[与上帝和好]的关系，经历赦罪的平安及重生的喜乐。是的，[与上帝和好]是信仰旅程的起点，也是生命成长的基础。我们确信：上帝是一切生命美善的源头，离了他，我们什么都不能做(约15：5)。

其次，我们这群蒙恩与上帝和好的人，需要多多地祷告和不断地操练，才能作个劝人和好的使者；一生致力于追求和睦。我们必须先从“与家人和好”开始。虽然这是一件不容易的事，但却很重要。然后扩大到教会这个属灵大家庭里的弟兄姐妹！所谓“家和万事兴”，这个属灵大家庭必须先做到内部和谐，才能够留得住老朋友及新朋友。这也是稳固教会的根基！

昔日，天父怎样差遣了耶稣，今日耶稣也照样差遣了我们(约20：21)。历代的忠心信徒们都能贯彻始终地跟随耶稣的脚踪，今日的我们亦当如此；耶稣当日所吩咐的大使命是：每一位信徒都当与世界和好！我们要在人群中活出作光作盐的生命。

如今，每主日崇拜结束前，信徒们都要接受上帝的祝福与差遣，而后进入人群当中，扮演福音使者的角色，成为上帝与世人之间的桥梁，使未信者有朝一日成为耶稣的门徒。

从今年8月开始，教会的主题是[与世界和好]。因此，本堂特意安排了布道培训、福音讲座、布道营会等聚会活动……主要的目的是要加强我们爱上帝、爱人灵魂的心，将布道生活化。另一方面，让我们有整体的行动来支持各语音的布道聚会，同心协力地与人分享基督的福音，领人归主。

让我们立志做个忠心到底的好门徒，继续与和平使者耶稣同行，成为广传福音的好使者！



厦语崇拜家庭日

陈树霖教授



为了配合今年教会的主题：“与家人和好”，本堂厦语崇拜于5月29日公共假日，举行一个别开生面的家庭日。我们邀请了四音崇拜的会友带家里大小，包括未信主的成员一起参加。

当天有三个特别项目；第一，让参加者齐心制作一个属于自己的十字架。第二，大家共同享用正宗的福建菜肴。第三，会众一起观赏一部感人肺腑的福音电影。

由于制作十字架需要足够的桌椅，我们原定只接受两百人报名。结果到报名截止当天，我们共收到262位的报名（其中厦语崇拜有161人，华语85人，英语16人，印尼语原有2人，但后因事退出），加上牧职人员，我们需要270个座位！而楼下副堂根本没有足够的桌子！经过一番的讨论与策划，我们甚至动用了二楼的桌子。然后每三张桌子接成一行，有13个椅子绕着，每行背向讲台的一端不放椅子。我们共排了20行，提供260座位，加上一个可坐10人的圆桌，正好预备了整整270个座位。

据当天的天气预报应该会有雷阵雨，然而一早醒来竟是风和日丽的大晴天！有几位老姐妹一大早就来报到。上午十点，我们准时开始在圣殿颂赞。祷告后，就开始向会众讲解制作十字架的基本方法，但也鼓励会友按自己的想像力随意创作。我们所分配的原料，是一种会自然风干的粘土。粘土由密封的包装中取出时是柔软的，但在空气中会逐渐风干，数小时后开始干硬，24小时后会完全硬化。因此，在制作过程中需要不时用少许的水，保持粘土的软性，同时平滑粘土的表面，且能协助衔接个别的粘土分块。为确保十字架不致分肢断裂，我们建议用牙签在内部做支架。而且拍摄了一个4分钟的视频，并配上“我心灵得安宁”(It is well with my soul)的圣乐，再加上中英文字幕，作为十字架制作的示范。

讲解完毕，会众按指示，分批下楼到副堂。十分钟内，全体都按部就班就座。大家随即开始动工。很欣慰的是，从整个十字架的制作过程，充分地表现“与家人和好”的精神，弟兄姐妹们不分男女老少围坐桌子，聚精会神地做手工。大家有说有笑，彼此互相观摩。手脚快的成员，作好自己的十字架后，也协助年长者，帮他们搓揉、切割。

从图（一）全景照片可看到当日活动的宏观。



图（一）十字架制作现场活动全景照片(Panoramic View)

当大家陆续地完成制作，我们请他们把各自的作品放进一个打开的塑料盒子，并拿到副堂一个角落，让粘土在电风扇下继续吹干，一直到下午回家时才领取。

请看图（二）中排列整齐玲珑满目的一些作品。



图（二）：排列整齐等待吹干的部分作品



一位满有创意的姐妹还带回一块剩余的粘土，继续制作一个脚垫，加上两个小十字架。

图（三）显示这位姐妹的精心作品。



图（三）：一位姐妹的精心作品





十字架制作完毕，大家共同享用美味的福建佳肴，包括炒冬粉、蒸芋头饭、扣肉与蒸包、杂菜、虾枣、卤鸭等等。两百多人的会众井然有序地在20分钟内，顺序拿到食物，回到原先的桌位，享受丰富的午餐。谈笑的声音此起彼落。

午餐后的电影是一部由真人真事的故事改编的福音影片。片名为“生命因爱动听”。这是一部有水准的影片，曾在好几个国际电影节中获奖。当年在香港放映时，还居冠票房记录。电影主角名叫Tracy，在一家专门收留绝症病人的西门山医院作社工。那里阴冷幽静，绝望的气息弥漫，甚至专科医生也是奇怪的人。有位叫阿猫的女孩子患上胃癌，画了一张画，叹息“We are hopeless”。乐观自信的Tracy决定以自己的方法来帮助那些在绝望中的古怪的人们。但想不到，从一次的检查报告中，Tracy发现自己患上末期骨癌。那一刻，她从社工变成了绝症病人！一直深爱妻子的万豪对Tracy康复抱着极大的期望，Tracy对丈夫不离不弃的爱深受感动。一次偶然的機會，Tracy遇上一位姐妹燕姐，在燕姐的点化下她终能明白“生命中最大的神迹，就是从绝望中找到希望”！Tracy和万豪不单更懂得珍惜对方，而且更用自己的生命来改变周围的病人，直至那天她恋恋不舍地离开世界；医院里有条通往化疗室的走廊被病人们称为“Dead Man Walking”，每走一步，无数空洞的回音就沉重地击打在病人的心中。第一次走上这条“死囚之路”的时候，她想到那些传说，吓得不敢向前迈进半步。这时深爱着她的丈夫，紧紧握着她的手，他们十指相扣的手心里有一个十字架，他看着她的眼睛说，“我们三个人，一起走”。在死亡面前，她开始迅速成长，学会了以乐观精神影响他人的生命。因为，在爱里没有惊惶、没有恐惧、没有悲伤，有的是安祥。

电影情节感人，当我看到万豪手里拿着一张大卡片面对Tracy，上写着“I only love you”时，热泪不停地流。难怪陈新坚牧师在电影结束后的短讲中如此说：“我看了这部影片十次，十次都流眼泪！”因为此部电影中所带出的爱是包括了：亲情的爱、友情的爱、上帝的爱。因着爱，生命不再是绝望，而是一首动听的歌曲！

结束时，陈牧师为会众祷告；祈愿上帝使我们更懂得珍惜家人，而主内弟兄姐妹之间也能更加彼此互相关爱和体恤。

散会时，天色有点阴霾，开始下着细雨，然而这不减低弟兄姐妹们满腔的热诚，大家兴高采烈地领回自己的作品，心怀十字架的爱踏上归途。



本堂崇拜与音乐退修会

日期: 19-05-18 星期六 早上9点 地点: TA 2

黄勤媚

敬拜是基督徒信仰生活的核心，崇拜是教会最重要的“活动”。每主日的崇拜皆有许多台前、幕后的弟兄姐妹在服事。直落雅逸堂的弟兄姐妹对于服事的忠心是值得赞赏的，当中有许多人已服事多年，从不言倦。因此，崇拜与音乐委员会特于今年5月19日，为本堂凡是在崇拜中服事的弟兄姐妹举办退修会，其目的有三个：

- (一) 让服事者有机会停下脚步，重温起初服事的心，重燃服事的热忱，继续往前行；
- (二) 透过创意的敬拜方式，让每个人都参与其中，好更新大家对于敬拜的体验和认知。
- (三) 配合教会今年的主题“与家人和好”，让四个语音崇拜的弟兄姐妹有交流的机会。

参加退修会的人数大概95人。节目分成三个部分：回顾、重塑、更新。在回顾的部分，蔡伟山牧师透过主耶稣的服事态度，来引导所有参加者采用每组两人的方式来分享和回顾自己的事奉心态和旅程：

昔日，主耶稣以天父的事为念（路2：49），他体贴天父的心，因而马不停蹄，甘心服事人。如今回头省察一下我们自己；事奉时有否体贴、顺服上帝的心意？在事奉中可有喜乐？

主耶稣在世时，一贯始终地坚持完成祂在地上的工作（约17：4），他忠心到底，连那最艰难的十字架道路都没有让他退缩！其中秘诀就是祷告和遵从上帝的话语。而今，回头看下自己，在我们事奉的经历中有没有灰心绝望过？上帝如何让我们在黑夜中依然可以歌唱！（伯35：10）我们如何走过事奉中的黑暗期？

蔡牧师在总结时特别强调；在事奉的行列中并没有分大小，也没有谁比较重要，只要是奉耶稣基督的名所做的任何服事，不论在你我看

来，也许是多么微不足道，但在上帝眼中都是有价值的。

勉励过后，大家都到圣台前跪下，向上帝献上感恩的祭，也祈求主施落恩典，好加强我们事奉的力量，并为自己的服事能有适当的接班人来祈求。对我来说，这是一个很震撼感人的画面。我不晓得有多少人曾经在十字架的面前俯伏祷告，但“跪下”这个动作，我相信必定会加深弟兄姐妹对于上帝的敬畏和虔诚，也更深刻地感受到上帝的临在。

接下来是丰盛的茶点。随后，是分组呈献各自选择的项目；其中有各民族的诗歌（韩国、西班牙、印尼和日本）、创意读经、打击乐、手铃和舞蹈。在呈献节目之前每一个小组都有一个小时的练习，之后大家就集合在圣殿参与一场创意崇拜。当天的崇拜主题是“五旬节”，除了配合教会节期，也是为了强调在圣灵的充满中，万国万民虽然语言不同、文化不同，却能同心讲述上帝的大作为。而且就在我们虔诚敬拜时，地上万国万民、普世教会也都在敬拜，这是何等震撼的认知！

崇拜的每一个环节由不同兴趣的小组来带领。从序乐到祝福，皆由弟兄姐妹用创意的方式和各国语言来表达——唱、跳、诵读。虽然所呈献的并非自己熟悉的领域，练习的时间也不长，但是大家都表现得非常好，也感受得到大家都全力投入敬拜。此外，在崇拜结束时，大家围成一个大圆圈，用舞蹈动作来赞美上帝。退修会就在轻快的音乐和一片温馨的笑声中画上句点。

盼望弟兄姐妹在回顾中能重温上帝的恩典，重新寻回起初事奉的热忱；在重塑和更新中，能得到更多动力继续服事，也从不同的敬拜方式中加深对敬拜的体会；从集体的分享和学习中建立友谊，加深一家人的关系。

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坚信铝业私人有限公司工厂 开幕感恩崇拜

李幼吟报道



2018年1月1日这一天，对陈振盈先生一家人来说，是个特别感恩难忘的日子；因这是他们在这8年来在邻国先后设立了两间工厂的一段奇妙恩典历程！

记得8年前(2010)1月2日，是我第一次受邀前往邻国JB，参加他们新设立的工厂开幕感恩崇拜；那天早

上，当我踏进那间规模不小的新工厂时，只见里里外外都挤满了本堂会友与教牧，内心里既好奇又感动，因在那一刻，眼目所及的情景，完全颠覆了我脑海中对所谓“工厂”的概念；在仿佛间，它已化为一间虔诚敬拜主的“教堂”了；开幕仪式一开始，一首首悠扬悦耳的赞美诗不断地萦绕于崭新工厂的四周。接下来是虔诚的感恩祷告和牧师的证道勉励——。

这是我第一次前来赴这么一个别具意义的感恩崇拜。当时情景，至今记忆犹新！

没想到8年后的今天，我又有机会随着大伙儿前来赴陈家第二间新厂的开幕感恩礼拜。这一次与往年有些不同的是；聚会场所设在二楼。而在楼下接待处所接触到的除了他们家属外，在另一旁却多了好几位当地工作人员，一见到我们的到来，都礼貌周到的微笑迎接，让人倍感温馨和亲切。

早上11点，感恩崇拜一开始，二楼的职员办公室，早已化成了崇拜聚会的“礼堂”。回顾四周；所有座位已坐满了前来赴会的宾客。唱诗祷告后是；

《见证陈家在邻国设厂的奇妙历程》——由华如弟兄分享，摘录如下；

“转眼间成立于2010年坚信铝业工厂至今已进入了第九年的时间；回顾过去两年，我们也曾经历了一段前景不明的暗淡市场；当时我国建筑业面临强烈竞争（尤其是来自中国的建筑商和发展商）；他们都以超低的价格投标；这种价格连厂房的费用都无法应付。只好谢绝了这些工程。而这段时间，我们只接受了两项本地工程；HDB和一项私人公寓。

但奇妙的是；在这种前景低迷的一年里，我们竟能够在两年前所买下的地段，扩建了今天呈现在大家面前的第二间工厂！不但价钱合理，而且有关厂商又能在最短时间完工，简直是双赢！。而我们也因为工程少，较有时间集中精力于新厂的运作。新厂竣工后，我们竟又接到澳洲十多项的新工程！主的恩典果真是超过所求所想！在这里，我要再次的向全能的上帝献上无尽的感恩，同时，也要感谢本公司所有成员，一路来的忠心配合与努力；因这也是有赖于他（她）们在各方面尽忠职守的成果。”

接着是施牧师的证道，他说：

“今天是我们二度受邀来到在这里，参加坚信铝业私人有限公司第二间新工厂开幕感恩礼拜，相信大家在这这一刻都会与振盈兄一家同心合一地为着上帝的奇妙恩典与慈爱献上感恩。坚信公司从创立至今，先后建立了两间工厂，期间所经过的路程，风风雨雨，错综复杂，其中滋味，也只有亲历其境的人，方能体会！

今日摆在我们面前的美好场景，完全是建立在“坚定不移的信心”基础上所结出的果实；无论顺境或逆境，他们都一心一意地靠着神的扶持与带领，继续往前走。公司取名“坚信”果真名副其实！

今天，他们选择在新年的第一天来举行感恩奉献礼拜，更是别具意义；因为，新年往往叫人想起“时间”。“时间”是一直不停地向前走，而我们所处的环境也是一直在改变中。由于时间与空间的迅速流失与改变，更令我们感到万分无助与无奈！

但是，我们所信靠的上帝却是全能与奥秘的；罗马书33节告诉我们；“上帝是具有「丰富的智慧和知识」的上帝。我们虽然不能完全了解祂的奥秘，但祂确实离我们不远。而且是个时常赐于我们恩典和慈爱的上帝。所以，尽管我们是处在这么一个瞬息万变，甚至常常令我们措手不及的世界中，这一位永恒的上帝却是我们随时的帮助和依靠。因祂是我们生命的主，更是一位永恒不变的上帝！无论逆境或顺境，他都引领着我们朝向正确的目标前行。

保罗说；我们是「本于祂，倚靠祂，归于祂」罗（11；36）。这句话肯定了所有信靠上帝的人，若顺从上帝的指引，必然会达到目标。

因为宇宙万物皆「本于祂」，祂不但给我们生命，也供应我们所需的一切；因此，我们每一天都要依靠祂的引领；并将所成就的一切归荣耀都于祂。更要常常为着我们有这样一位仁慈的上帝而感恩。

无论晴天雨天都有上帝美好的旨意。正如罗（12：12）所说的；“在指望中要喜乐，在患难中要忍耐，祷告要恒切。”

但我们却常常忘恩负义，以为我们日常所拥有的一切都是理所当然的。因此，顺境时不懂得珍惜和感恩，逆境时就常常埋怨或怀疑。

感谢仁慈的上帝，他不但让我们在日常生活中毫无欠缺；他更不惜一切的赐下祂的独生爱子耶稣作为我们的赎罪祭，让我们与上帝和好，得到永生的盼望！而我们的回应就是将自己当作活祭献上，让祂使用。如保罗所提醒的；

“所以弟兄们，我以神的慈悲劝你们，将身体献上，当作活祭，是神所喜悦的；你们如此事奉乃是理所当然的。”罗（12：1）”

这个充满奇妙恩典的感恩崇拜，就在王聪光荣誉会督的祝福声中来到尾声——。

接下来，会众们都移步到楼下享用主人殷勤款待的美味佳肴。当我坐在楼下那宽敞整洁的“餐厅”与大家一起享用佳肴时，才从他们家人口中知道；原来这个我原以为是“餐厅”的地方，其实是工厂员工们的工作场地，而今是为了这一天的感恩典礼，才将之化为一间明亮宽敞的临时“餐厅”！上帝的慈爱确是无微不至；不但在事业上赐予他们丰盛的恩典，在日常生活的琐事上也赋予他们随机应变的急智与巧思！



这一天的感恩崇拜一直到下午2点多，大家才带着喜乐感恩的心踏上归程。



我在灵里的成长历程

何安全

今年五月我参加了教会在峇淡岛举行的执事退修营。在这退修营中，大家达成一个共识，就是各音崇拜要有行动，积极的帮助会友在灵里成长。如今，我希望能在这方面略尽绵力；藉着个人这段奇妙的成长历程与大家共勉之。

记得，我九岁那年读小学三年级的时候，就蒙受神的恩典；有一天，英文老师在课堂上问了一个问题：“你们当中谁是基督徒？”也不知何故，我竟然无厘头的举起了我的手。其实，那时我对基督教完全不认识。但是，更奇妙的是；自那次举手过后，我心灵中竟起了这么一个念头：我有一天一定要成为基督徒！

现在回想当时的情形，我由衷的感谢那位英文老师，是她把福音的种子种入我心里。虽然，她从来没有在课堂上向我们传福音。但是神的工作就是那么奇妙！有时，他借着基督徒平常的言行举止，就在不知不觉间撒下了福音的种子！

开始时，我有时会跟着我二姐到直落亚逸礼拜堂参加主日学。但是，我们并没有每个主日到礼拜堂，而是一两个月才来一次。其中有一段时间，我甚至很久没有到教堂。那时，主日学校长是林清菊女士。有一次，她到我家探访时，知道我每次都要依赖姐姐带着我搭巴士到礼拜堂，觉得很不方便，便说她每个星期日可以安排时间来载我去礼拜堂。我就欣然接受了。

如今想来；如果当年林清菊女士没有用车来载我去礼拜堂，我可能就会永远停止来参加聚会了，也因此失去了“我要成为基督徒”的最初心志。林清菊女士的这份关怀初信者的爱心是该受赞许的，也是我们该学习的典范。我想；弟兄姐妹也可考虑以这种宽阔的爱心来帮忙载送有需要的慕道友来教会参加主日崇拜。

后来，有大学同学来邀请我参加大学基督徒团契。那时的我，虽然是基督徒，但除了主日到教会来参加崇拜外，从来就没有更进一步的追求灵里的长进；只是作个挂名的基督徒。一直到我参加了团契每年一次在假期举办的退修营会后，我的灵命才得到唤醒。当时，每次的退修营都有激发性的主题，让参加者深思，也激

发参加者对神的敬畏及属灵的追求。

我想，我们的教会也可定期举办类似的退修营，激发会友对神的敬畏和属灵的追求。

在大学团契里，每个星期天晚上七点半都有聚会活动；所邀请的都是很好的讲员，让我们在灵性得到造就。因此，我想，我们教会的勉励会也可提供类似的栽培工作。目前，本堂勉励会所提供的平台跟主日崇拜有所不同；因为讲员能更好的与会友互动。教会也可邀请合适的讲员来证道，让会友得到属灵的栽培。过去，王会督娘曾在勉励会负责带领会友查考“启示录”；陈树霖教授也曾带领过讲解“八福”。当时参加这两种课程的人数都超过五十人。此外，在勉励会的例常聚会中也提供栽培/训练的平台让会友学习服侍的机会。

在念大学的期间，我就开始参加我们教会星期六的灵修小组。那时，我们是查考马太福音。当时我是负责带领查考马太第十章。后来，从这灵修小组成立了青年团契。我被选为几届的灵修小组的代表。

藉着参加研读圣经，及参加服侍，我在神的道上慢慢的得到长进，也加强了我对神有更深一层的认识和敬爱。在此，我鼓励弟兄姐妹们可考虑参加主日崇拜以外的一个聚会（如小组或勉励会），并加入服侍行列，以便更认识神，更亲近神。

多年后，我获选为勉励会会长。开始时，我很担心我不能胜任；但是，在服侍的过程中，我看到神一步一步的引领。至今，我已担任这职位二十年了。我的经验告诉我，在服侍神的工作上，我们不需担心自己没有能力；其实，只要有想要服侍的决心，神必然赐给他力量。我们需要做的是踏出服侍的第一步。

其实，我们先要有一颗愿意的心；愿意追求在灵里的成长，甘心乐意来事奉神，就没有难成的事。另一方面，我们也要积极参加主日崇拜外的一个聚会，如小组或勉励会等，与弟兄姐妹们在一起互相勉励，互相扶持。在此，鼓励大家踏出信心的第一步，加入服侍行列，在神的带领中尽心尽力，荣神益人。



追悼我们敬爱的

李幼吟报道

诗班指挥陈銑博士

2018年3月10日 施谦益牧师证道

3月8日一早，意外地接到我们昔日指挥陈銑博士安息主怀的消息！接下来的那一天，手机里满满承载着的是诗班员们依依难舍的挽词与慰语！我一时之间，百感交集；因近些年来，陈博士有段时间回中国，或到世界各地旅游观光。因此，较少机会与他见面。一直到最近，他们夫妇俩，才又再回到我们当中，友安姐也依旧回到诗班侍奉，而陈博士看来身体较弱，多数时候他总是沉默寡言地坐着靠近诗班的座位。因此，我也一直认为；他只是体力较弱，精神较差而已。就没料到今日再次接到有关他的消息时，竟是最后的告别！

3月10日夜晩，我们全体诗班员，带着沉重与不舍的心情匆匆赶到守丧礼拜现场追悼；从远处，我就看到有关场地早已坐满了前来吊丧的亲友；由于会众很多，我无法近前到灵柩前去慰问友安姐及有关家属。只好坐在较后座的位子。不久，追思礼拜也开始了，当厦语诗班到灵柩前献唱时，我蓦然回首，才望见友安姐端庄肃穆地坐在钢琴旁，正默默地为诗班弹奏着所献唱的诗歌！这一刹那；我内心里千头万绪；尤其对友安姐在这种非常时刻，所呈现出来的那种淡定豁达的神态感到一股莫名的佩服与感动！这该都是来自上面的恩惠与能量吧！

正如当晚施牧师在勉励时所说的；

“在这短暂的世间，我们虽然失去了一位忠心侍奉的诗班指挥，但在那永恒天国里的诗班则增加了一个新成员。我想；今夜，他应该已加入了天上神宝座前的“永恒之颂”。

这最大的诗班，正唱着伟大圣洁的新颂歌，他们的声音像众水的声音和大雷的声音，他们是从各国，各族，各民，各方来的得胜信徒，站在宝座和羔羊面前，身穿白衣手拿棕树枝，正欢欣地唱着上帝仆人《摩西之歌》和《羔羊之歌》——（启 7：9-12；15：2-4）”



陈铨教授
1945 - 2018

厦语属区小组献诗
09-03-2018



陈铨教授
1945 - 2018

厦语诗班
守夜礼拜献诗

施牧师当晚的证道摘录：

“记得，陈铨博士是从1992年开始，就加入本堂厦语诗班；当时，他不只是一位诗班员，他也是诗班里的一个充满活力的指挥。而友安姐则担任诗班司琴。

陈博士在担任厦语诗班指挥的那段时日，不但每个主日崇拜都按时带领诗班练习，准时献唱。更难得的是；在这段期间，他除了每日要忙碌于南大的教课外（他当时是南洋理工大学副教授），还特别在百忙中抽出宝贵时间，先后两次（注：在施牧师的陪同下）带领厦语诗班到西马教会献唱；记得，第一次的《西马之旅》是于2007年9月29日，他率领一团40几人的团队到马六甲基督教卫理公会教堂举行了一个不平凡的厦语诗班赞美会-“上帝是爱”。获得当地教会的热心款待与爱心赞赏。随即又在2008年10月8日再接再厉，第二次带领诗班远征西马昔加末基督教卫理公会教堂举行了一个厦语诗歌布道会“耶稣是奇妙教主。”

“音乐事奉”是荣神益人的事奉，如今，我们在地上的诗班里殷勤操练学习，正是为着将来到天上去加入那“永恒之颂”而彩排。因此，我们应趁着在地上的年日，好好把握机会，忠心于音乐的事奉。态度要认真；对于所要献唱的诗歌勤加练习，将来才能在天上宝座前与众圣徒们一起欢然歌唱。

当年，陈博士在中国时，他曾经是福建泉州教会的诗班指挥，可说是一位经验丰富的指挥。他在本堂担任厦语诗班指挥时，态度认真，勤奋。因他深知；要奉献给上帝的祭是要完美无瑕的。因此，厦语诗班在他的指导下，每一次的献唱都有显著的进步。

我记得他生前曾经说过要带厦语诗班到厦门和闽南一带访问当地教会，与当地教会的诗班员们交流与观摩。如今看来，他这个愿望尚未落实！因此我想；如今，上帝让我们继续活在这世上，应该是还有些未完成的使命要我们去完成！故我们还得继续努力加把劲，一一地完成。

今晚，我们在这里追思陈铨的离去，内心固然不舍，但这也只是短暂的离别，因为他如今仍旧是活在上帝的面前。将来我们回到父那里去时，必然与他相会。因为耶稣说：『上帝是活人的上帝，不是死人的上帝。』耶稣也说：『复活在我，生命也在我，信我的人，虽然死了，也必复活，凡活着信我的人必永远不死。』

算来，陈铨博士从中国搬到新加坡至今已有27年了，在厦语诗班前后侍奉了21年。今天他又从新加坡搬到天上去，这是陈博士最后的搬家-永恒之家。当我们有一天从地上搬到天上去的时候，我们就能与他重逢。”



陈銑公子希临当晚的追悼，特摘录如下：

“父亲的一生是充满主的恩典的；他在1986年复活节和母亲一起在美国亚特兰大长老会受洗，开始了基督徒的生活；从那一刻起，无论到何处，他都一直以他的音乐恩赐来侍奉主。即使到了最后几年，身体较虚弱无法到教会侍奉，家里依然每天可以听到他在读经祷告和唱诗的声音。父亲爱好音乐，年轻时，喜欢拉手风琴和弹钢琴。信主后就一直以上天赐给他的这种恩赐在教会诗班侍奉。他把大部分的时间和精力，都投入了音乐侍奉中，因此，日子过得充实而精彩。一直到近几年，他被病痛困扰，日子虽然过得辛苦，但他和母亲依然凭着信心专心依靠主，努力过好每一天；他每个主日都和母亲到教会做礼拜，和我们一起出外用餐。有时也和家人到各处旅游观光。一直到2017年上旬，他又做第二次赴美，不过健康状况已大不如前。因此，多数时间在家静养。一直到去年11月间，母亲又陪他回厦门一趟，在这期间，他会见了许多亲友，他内心又高兴又感恩。这也是他最后一次踏上故乡的土地。因为有主的同在，无论境遇如何，父亲内心里总是充满平安与喜乐。而今，他已卸下世间的劳苦重担，回到那永恒的天家，永享安乐。正如布道家葛培理所说的；“我的家在天上，我在世间只是过客。”

感谢大家今晚来参加家父的追思礼拜，在此，谨代表全家向各位致谢！

儿子 希临



陈銑博士遗孀友安姐于3月11日殡葬礼当天对本堂教牧会友及亲友的致谢；

尊敬的牧师，主内弟兄姐妹，众亲友们：

感谢大家今天下午集聚在这里，和我们一起送别我们最亲的人陈銑。我一生得主恩典无数，上帝给我最大的恩典就是赐给我一个非常好的丈夫。他爱主，爱人，爱家，也很爱我。在我们夫妻几十年的生活中，我们一直遵守圣经的教导：“爱是凡事包容，凡事相信，凡事盼望，凡事忍耐，爱是永不止息。”在这几十年的岁月里，我们一直用这爱情观来维系我们之间的感情。

然而，到了今天，我和陈銑42年的夫妻生活就要划上句号，我的心固然万般悲痛，万般不舍！但我内心依然顺服，我知道他这几年饱受病痛折磨，过得很辛苦。如今他卸下世上的劳苦重担，安然回到天上的家。我确信；当我走完这世间的旅程，我将在那永恒的国度里和他再相聚。

从陈銑住院及后来到临终关怀中心的这一个月，蔡牧师，陈牧师，以及施牧师夫妇，多次到医院为他祷告，唱诗，鼓励，安慰我们。而本堂会友领袖陈教授夫妇，小组组长，组员和诗班的弟兄姐妹，也都先后到医院探访。有的用手机微信或短信等发信息为他祷告，给我加油！南洋大学的同事得到消息后，也派代表来探望他。在新加坡，我的家庭成员很少。但在我最困难的时候，我得到的却是来自教会这个属灵大家庭的那股充满基督的大爱和关怀。我非常感恩；因我更深深切地感受到主时刻与我同在！

陈銑，你放心，我和孩子们会好好生活，我们也会常常想念你。在我心中，你永远是我的最爱！

妻：友安



上帝特别的天使

王丹丝

我相信全天下的父母，都希望孩子出生后，将来能够成龙成凤。我也不例外，总希望我的儿子将来至少能当一名医生！然而，事与愿违；我生产过程并不顺利，临盆时，生门却不能打开，水袋又破了，忍痛了29小时后才破腹生产。

儿子出生后，身体发育还算正常，一岁就会走路，但却迟迟不说话，玩的方式也和常人不同。母亲安慰我说，男孩有些会迟说话。岂料在他十七个月大的时候，先生才发现儿子和他一个患有自闭症的小侄子一样，每天起床，都做同样的动作。

我便带儿子到国大医院检查，结果证实了儿子患有中高度自闭症！后来我也慢慢地发现他真的和别的孩子不一样；上主日学时就滚在地上，总是不肯好好坐下来听课。我每天以泪洗脸，祷告求神怜悯！当中也有不少时候灵命跌入谷底！我和先生商量后；决定拿九个月无薪假期来照顾孩子。在这段时间，几乎每种治疗方法都尝试过。每个月花在儿子的治疗上大约一万多，一直到他大约10岁左右。

最伤心的是；找不到一间幼儿园肯收他，而且每次带他出外时，时常遭受到别人异样的眼光！

但后来才发现：带给我最多痛苦的儿子，也成了一股把我从痛苦中扶起的力量；神一次又一次地藉着儿子在主日学所学到的儿歌如；“有耶稣在船中”，安慰我不用惧怕，不用挂虑，有耶稣陪着我打这场非一般的战争！

我曾打算安排他进入自闭症“名校” Pathlight School。然而，他考了两次都考不上！就转到另一间教会学校去。

最后，由于各种不同的因素，我们又回到了直落亚逸礼拜堂。当时，我每晚都在教会祷告会中迫切地祈求上帝为我们开路。有一天，施谦益牧师来跟我谈论有关我儿子的事，他也透露；本堂将设立照顾特殊儿童主日学。不久，本堂“特殊儿童主日学事工”也就这样开始了。

我无意中发现了儿子喜欢玩保龄球，我就立刻送儿子到“特殊儿童保龄球”学习中心。儿子在短短的两年里，荣获全国Get Active 打胜了全国的自闭儿童，在去年和今年分别获得了17岁以下组合的冠，季军。此外，儿子还有其他特常；如弹钢琴，打鼓，画画等。

希望有一天神会使用这些“特殊天使”，到世界各地把主的奇妙大爱传开，让更多人得到医治和救恩。

如今，我终于能够体会到马太（6:33）所说的：“你们要先求他的国和他的义，这些东西都要加给你们了。”神的应许果真是真实可靠的！

Nepal Medical Mission

1 - 6 September 2017

Tan Joo Lin

How Beautiful are the Feet of Those Who Bring the Good News - Romans 10:15

A group of volunteers on a medical mission trip had the privilege to visit Nepal in September 2017. Nepal is a beautiful landlocked country between India and Tibet which lies along the southern slopes of the Himalayan mountain ranges.

The medical mission, a joint partnership between Telok Ayer Chinese Methodist Church (TACMC) and Methodist Church Nepal (MCN), aimed to conduct a general health medical camp in Tanahun District in Nepal. The purpose of the camp was to support the church planting work and effort in Tanahun District from September 1-6, 2017. The operation focused on conducting a two-day health check for the community supported by Methodist Society of Nepal, a local non-profit organization.

I had always wanted to visit Nepal but I never would have dreamt that I would visit this beautiful country for a mission work. Last year, I signed up with 13 fellow Christian brothers and sisters from TACMC for this medical mission. During the six-day trip, all of us, I believe, had the opportunity to have close fellowship with God in different ways as He showed us what we needed to know about Him.

I believe that it is natural for us to contemplate when God offers us opportunities to serve Him. We tend to ponder about the commitment we have

to make and worry about how our daily routines will be affected. It took me two years to make a decision to volunteer for this trip and had sought God to direct me! As the preparation of the trip began, I started to do some research and reviews on Nepal and Kathmandu. As more information was gathered, more concerns began to build up in my head – the altitude, motion sickness, the weather, hygiene, safety and food. But God continued to assure me that all would be well. Eventually, with the assurance that God will be in control, a sense of peace came to me. As written in Proverbs 3:5-6 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

Whilst I was thinking that I was doing God's work in Nepal, little did I know that God was working within me in my walk with Him in Nepal. The whole experience was an eye-opener to witness God's love and provision to the local church, pastors and their families, and church workers.

We attended the local church, Wesley MC, on the second day of our arrival. I saw many local Christian brothers and sisters dressed in their best and they appeared so joyful to be in the House of the Lord. It was such a heartwarming feeling to be in the small chapel, seated among the local





Christian brothers and sisters and singing songs of praise to worship our Heavenly Father. Though we did not understand the Nepali language, we could still come together to worship our Heavenly Father and had fellowship with one another. Our shared understanding was that it was God's love that had made it possible for us to enjoy that fellowship. "Praise the Lord, all you nations, extol Him, all you people" (Psalm 117:1). My heart began to swell as I remembered Matthew 28:19: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

The journey from Kathmandu to Tanahun District was long and arduous with meandering and bumpy roads, but the awesome scenery along the way took all the tiredness away. I was reminded of God through his awesome creations! He is indeed the Creator of heaven and earth and the Ruler of the Universe. During our six-day trip, we encountered heavy rain, thick fog and hot weather. One evening, we encountered heavy rain and thick fog on our way back to the lodge on the hilltop. Though the road was slippery and visibility was poor, God's hands were on Gopal Sebastian, the missionary to Methodist Mission Society Nepal, as he directed the driver

who maneuvered the steering wheel skillfully to negotiate the bends despite the formidable fog. I felt God's presence was with us each time we set forth to our destination and He had kept us safe. His promise in Psalm 121: 5-8 was indeed genuine to me, for indeed "The Lord watches over you - the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from harm, He will watch over your life, the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore."

At the medical camp, we had five stations: Doctor and Nurses, Blood Pressure Monitoring, Dental Station, Dispensary Station and Optometrist Station. I was assigned to the blood pressure station. We had about 420 people who came to the medical camp to seek medical treatments. Long queues were formed within minutes with the elderly, men and women, mothers with young children, and young girls and boys waiting eagerly for their turns to have their blood pressure taken. I was pleasantly surprised that many of them had blood pressure the within healthy range. I was told that the locals usually walked along hilly and winding road wherever they wanted to go. Though they could have other medical issues, I was certain that their daily walks contributed to their healthy blood pressure. I told myself that when I returned to Singapore, I would make an effort to walk more often to improve my health.



We visited Sophia Home, a girls' home that housed about 30 under-privileged and orphans aged 3-16 years old. We spent an evening with them. We shared a meal of Nasi Briyani and Momo "meat dumplings" and made origami. It was a delightful evening to interact with them. These children are the future of the church there. In Matthew 10:14, Jesus said "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." Proverbs 22:6 "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." I prayed for Pastor Lepcha, his wife and the staff of the Home that their faith would continue be lifted up and God's faithfulness would meet their needs every day.

Through this trip, I saw God's faithfulness and provision for His children who are doing the work

in Nepal. We sang the song "Think about His Love" several times during our morning devotions. When we think about His love, goodness and grace, we know and experience the greatness and abundance of the love that our Father has given to us.

Indeed, when one is ready to take a step forward in faith to serve our Heavenly Father, He will show us the way and bless us. God promises to bless us if we can meet with Him daily. This is also the reminder from Paul in Romans 1:12 "I'm eager to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours. In this way, each of us will be blessing to the other."

Reflection for Kunming English Camp

6th July 2017 to 13th July 2017

Justin Loo



Group photo after Captain's Ball session

Team members

Victoria King,
Koh Hin Ann,
Tan Yee Hern,
Justin Loo

Being the first mission trip I've participated in and my first travel to China, the trip to Kun Ming was nothing short of enriching. The purpose of the trip was to improve the standard of English among the university students there. Through this process, we also hope to develop closer bond with them so that we might bring them to Christ in the future.

Among the many new experiences and lessons learnt, three stood out.

Firstly, it's a blessing to give than to receive. Initially, I was hesitant to embark on this mission trip due to several reasons: uncertainties the trip entails, unfamiliarity with the local Chinese culture and conflicts with my school schedules. Fortunately, with much persuasion and encouragement from my parents and peers, I agreed. The preparation for this English teaching trip was no easy feat. It involved coming up with lesson plans, finding videos and creating our own teaching resources to use as lesson materials. A lot of time was spent for a thorough preparation and many late night discussions ensued even whilst in Kun Ming. However, the feeling of satisfaction upon seeing remarkable improvement in the students was unforgettable.

Secondly, this trip has taught me to be bold and stand up to our faith even in the face of rejection. I had the impression that Christianity is a religion that is not welcomed in China and one might face persecution if we are not careful.



The team with local university students



Visiting cultural village with the students



Preparing props for talent show

Since the day we touched down in China, we had been cautious about our speech in public and watchful about our surroundings. Even when the lessons started, we were cautious to ensure that whatever we taught was just English and there were no elements of religion to it. However, there were several Christians among the group of students whose purpose was to bond with the non-believers, hoping to bring them to Christ. Despite the lack of receptiveness to Christianity, the local Christians were not afraid to proclaim their religion, never failing to make references to the Bible whenever possible and prayed openly before meals. This led me to ponder why I was afraid to be frank and to proclaim the fact that I am a Christian. Jesus put us in this world so that we may be light in the darkness. By being afraid, I was not doing what Jesus wanted me to do. On the later days of the English camp, I started to converse on a more personal level to some of the locals there and also told them bible stories when possible to get them interested. Though not all of them responded positively, there were a handful who got interested and even asked me further questions and requested me to tell more stories from the Bible. This taught me that while doing God's work, we should not be afraid of anything.

Lastly, I have had the first experience of leading a worship session as well as conducting a short bible study session with the local Christians on one of the mornings. Leading a bible study session to discuss on a scripture was definitely harder than it seems. It requires one to be familiar with the passage, have a deep insight not just to the events recorded but also to the unique point of view of every single character. This has given me a taste of what my Sunday school teachers must have gone through on a weekly basis to prepare for lessons and has led me to appreciate their effort more; I began to admire them for their incessant effort.

This trip has definitely been an unforgettable experience for me and if given a choice, I would definitely set time aside to go for another to have new experiences and more importantly, to grow stronger and bolder in Christ.

TESTIMONIES

Special Angel from the God

Magdalene Ong

I believe parents all over the world would like their children to be successful. I am no exception. When I was pregnant with my son, I dreamt that he would be a doctor in the future! Contrary to my wish, the delivery process was not smooth. When I was giving birth, my cervix was not sufficiently dilated, but the membrane had already broken. After suffering labour pain for 29 hours, I had to go for C-section.

After the son was born, his physical development was normal: he could walk when he was one year old. But he wouldn't speak, and he played in a way different from most children. My mother tried to comfort me by saying that some boys would begin to speak later. Lo and behold, when he was seventeen months old, my husband discovered that our son behaved like our nephew, who was diagnosed with autism.

I brought my son to the National University Hospital for an examination, and the diagnosis confirmed that he suffered from autism. Gradually, I also discovered that he was really different from other children; when he was studying in Sunday School, he would roll on the ground instead of sitting properly and paying attention in class. I cried my heart out every day and prayed for God's mercy! My spiritual life hit rock bottom! After discussing with my husband, I decided to take no pay leave to take care of my son for nine

months. During this time, we tried almost all kinds of treatment. We spent around \$10,000 on his treatment until he was about 10 years old.

The saddest part was that I couldn't find a kindergarten that was willing to take him as a student; in addition, in public places, people would look at him as if he is weird.

Nevertheless, I later discovered that my son who brought me pain, has become a uplifting force for me; God has repeatedly inspired me with the songs that my son learnt in Sunday school; "Lord is with me in the boat"; He comforted me and removed my fear, and affirmed me that Jesus is my companion to fight this extraordinary war!

I had wanted to send my son to "Pathlight", a well-known school for children with special needs. However, he failed to pass the test twice! We had to send him to a mission school.

Finally, due to various reasons, we came back to worship at the Telok Ayer Chinese Methodist Church. At that time, I earnestly prayed for God to open the way for us every night in church prayer meetings. One day, Pastor See came to talk to me about my son. He revealed that TA would have arrangement for children with special needs. Soon, the "Sunday School for Children with Special Needs" was established!



I accidentally discovered that my son liked to play bowling, and I immediately sent him to the bowling centre for children with special needs. In just two years, my son won several competitions in the national “Get Active” events for autistic children: in the “Below 17-year-old category” games, he was the Champion last year and won the third place this year. In addition, my son has other talents, such as playing the piano, playing drums, painting and so on.

I hope that one day God will use these “special angels” to spread the wonderful love of the Lord to the rest of the world, bringing healing and salvation to more people in the world.

I finally appreciated what was said in Matthew 6:33: “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” God’s promise is true and trustworthy!



THE SMARTPHONE (DE)GENERATION

Dawn Lum

What do the words “anxiety, trembling, dizziness, depression” mean to you? Do they sound like the symptoms of a serious medical condition? Well, these words describe the symptoms of a prevalent condition in the 21st century, “Nomophobia”, which means “no-mobile-phone-phobia”.

As Christians, it is necessary that we think critically about how smartphones affect us both at an individual level as well as the community level. What then are some balanced and biblical perspectives on these devices we cannot seem to live without?

Some statistics and trends

Let us start by examining some statistics and trends. In Singapore, survey findings in 2017 revealed that we spent over 12 hours on our digital devices daily. Out of the 12 hours, at least three hours are spent on the smartphone everyday. Unsurprisingly, in that same study, about one third of the respondents admitted that they were addicted to their smartphones. The problematic thing about smartphone addiction compared to other types of addiction like drug abuse is that it is socially accepted. A heavy phone user may be lauded as very tech-savvy, well-connected, or even very productive.

Consequences

When our smartphone usage is unchecked, undisciplined and unhealthy, you can imagine the many problems that ensue.

Cognitive Changes. Constant bombardment of reminders adds tremendous stress on the brain which has to process increasingly fragmented thoughts and information overload. Our attention span shrinks as a result. Our appetite for bite-sized information (often sensational and random) increases but real learning actually drops because it is merely information absorption not comprehension.

Time Distortion/Extortion. Next, our concept of time is also being challenged by smartphones. We are getting so many alerts that the concept of urgency is becoming arbitrary. Time also slips away fast when we use our smartphones. Features such as autoplay in YouTube, and auto refresh of newsfeed keep you glued to an endless stream of content.

Accompanying Anxiety. Another psychological impact of smartphones is a heightened sense of anxiety. There is the nagging fear of missing out, the urge to feel included, the need to stay connected constantly. It gets pretty stifling.

Identity Crisis. Such fears often give rise to identity/self-image issues. Social media amplifies our craving for social acceptance, causing us to obsess over what we put online. This easily leads to an unhealthy self-centeredness, giving way to other sins such as envy, covetousness, and judgmentalism.

Smartphone usage also takes a toll on our **physical bodies**. It makes you stay up late leading to sleep deprivation. I trust you know that sleep loss opens a Pandora box of other health issues. Your posture suffers too; neck and back pains are prevalent.

Now consider the **social impact** of smartphone usage – its effect on the way we interact with one another. A lot of research has shown that unchecked smartphone usage promotes anti-social behaviours. Smartphone usage can dominate a person’s attention to the point in which he or she simply ignores the people around him/her.

The Heart of the Matter

The psychological, physical and social impacts are but symptoms pointing to a deeper condition, a spiritual condition – idolatry. What is an idol? In Pastor John Piper’s words, “It is the thing or person loved more than God, wanted more than

God, desired more than God, treasured more than God, and enjoyed more than God.”

Idolatry is a disordered love – a love in the wrong order or priority. And the extent of such disordered love is nothing less than the complete domination of your affection, attention and devotion. This is the hijack of your soul. In Exodus 20, God gave us these commandments – “You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them”.

Now, we may not make idols out of gold and wood anymore. But these days, they sure look like a sleek piece of metal you hold in the palm of your hand. Many today feel that the smartphone is like a benevolent genie promising that we will never have to be alone, that we will never be bored, that we can control our lives with it. That sure is tempting!

However, when it comes to idolatry, the danger is not so much in an item, it is actually in us. Theologian John Calvin said that our heart is an idol factory. Theologian J.I. Packer unpacks this further by saying that it is impossible to worship nothing: we humans are worshipping creatures, and if we do not worship the God who made us, we shall inevitably worship someone or something else. In the Bible, idolatry is not just a problem in the Old Testament. It pervades throughout the whole Scriptures. In fact, the most common sin in the Bible that we are to avoid and reject is not adultery, murder, lying, or stealing. It is idolatry.

Why this emphasis? Well, because God absolutely hates idolatry. God hates idolatry because He is the only true God. Feel the gravity of these three words: **Only True God**. If He is the only true God, why would He share His glory with fakes? He would not! Why would He want to point people elsewhere when the fullness of life is found only in Him? He would not! And thank God for that!

He loves us too much to simply stand and watch us worship another that can never give us

fullness of life. Christianity is not about religion, but about relationship. Any idol, big or small, defiles that relationship. It brings a mistress to our relationship with God. Idolatry is spiritual prostitution. Our Heavenly Father wants nothing except a pure and unadulterated relationship with His children.

Rejecting Idolatry (Truths to Imbibe)

Now how can we be disciplined in the way we use our smartphones such that it does not become idolatry? We recognise that the issue is not so much in the smartphone itself. Rather, the issue is our tendency towards idolatry. That is the heart of the matter we need to address first. Otherwise, even if the smartphone is removed, another thing or person will replace it and you remain in the trap of idolatry.

To reject idolatry, there are some realities that we need to live and breathe by. We can look to 1 John 5:18-21 for some insights. “We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God (Jesus) keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them. We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.”

There are three “we know” statements in this passage. They are statements of knowledge, confidence and assurance.

Firstly, “We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin”. This suggests that new birth in Christ leads to new conduct, a changed life. How does this work? When we believe in Christ and receive His Holy Spirit, we are given the power over sin. It is a supernatural ability that keeps us from long-term, habitual sinning, and the ability to help us obey God’s ways. I use the word “supernatural” here because this power to overcome sin cannot be found in Man; it can only

be found in God. We cannot create this power, we can only receive it from Him. The power over sin is made possible by the impenetrable protection of Jesus. The evil one cannot harm us because Christ is more powerful than him and Christ protects us. Without the influence of the evil one, we can wean off sin that so grips our lives. That is not to say that we will neither struggle nor suffer. We will struggle and suffer, but we have the power over sin. Victory is ours.

Next, “We know that we are children of God, and the whole world is under the control of the evil one”. There is a duality in this statement: Everyone is either “of God” or “under the control of the evil one”. Neutrality is not possible. This means there is a choice to be made. We are either consciously living out our lives in Christ, or giving ourselves over to worldliness. One identity is based on family love while the other is based on enslavement (also known as evil control). Which identity will you choose? Who will you pledge your allegiance to? If you choose to be a Christian, be comforted by the certainty of your identity in God. You are His child and He loves you to the core. You are no longer under control of the devil.

Thirdly, “We know that the Son of God has come and given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true.” True believers are given a knowledge of spiritual things, something they do not previously have at all. Without this supernatural gift of understanding, we simply cannot know God. We would remain indifferent and blind. This knowledge of spiritual things is a knowledge of who God is, who we are and how we are to relate with Him. It is not an impersonal intellectual insight, but a personal knowledge grounded in the person and work of Jesus Christ. It is this new understanding that brings us into a personal relationship with the only true God.

In summary, these are the three “we know” statements that we need to live by in order to have a real shot at keeping idolatry permanently out of our lives. When we embrace these three realities, when we know we have a new power, identity and understanding, it leads us to the undeniable desire

and duty – to keep away from idols. Be on guard against “God-substitutes”.

Rejecting Idolatry (Steps to Take)

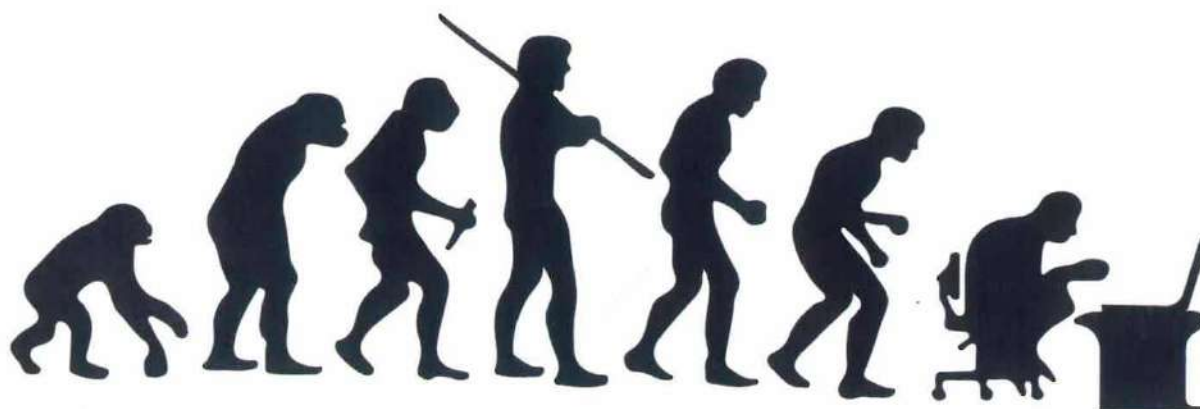
Keeping away from idols involves not just knowing the realities, it requires us to take practical actions that are both pre-emptive and corrective. There are active steps we can take to manage our smartphone usage. Here are some suggestions by healthcare professionals:

Awareness of Screen Time. It starts with awareness - knowing how much time you actually spend on your phone. There are useful apps that you can download which tracks screen time.

Digital Detox versus Fasting. This practice of digital detox involves refraining from using electronic devices for a period of time. Fasting is not merely an act of self-deprivation, but a spiritual discipline for seeking more of God’s fullness. This means that in place of the smartphone, we are to use the time freed up to pursue God’s agenda, not our own agenda. It could be reading more of His Word, intentionally praying for others, journaling, meeting up with fellow Christians. For a start, you can try fasting on Sundays for the first half of the day since that is when worship service happens. Some good digital habits that you can try out on a more frequent basis include:

1. Remove distracting apps on your home screen or completely. Keep the apps that you want to encourage yourself to use within convenient reach. If you want to cultivate the habit of reading daily devotions more regularly or learning a new language — keep these apps on your home-screen. However, for apps that simply suck up your time and distract you too much, banish them into folders on your second page of apps, or just cut them out of your life completely. You are richer without them.

2. Turn off as many push notifications as possible. Most of these things are not even urgent or important. They are dictating when you should



check your phone but it is time to stop that.

3. Greyscale. Next, turn on the greyscale on your phone. This is an interesting one indeed. When you switch your phone from technicolour to grayscale, the phone suddenly looks a lot less attractive and the incentive to check it out decreases.

4. Kick your phone out of the bedroom. Do not let your phone be the last thing you see at night and the first thing you check in the morning. Charge your phone in another room and use a regular alarm clock.

5. Choice of Content. Choosing the content you consume is supremely important. Think about who you are following, what you are subscribing, what you are watching online. The litmus test from Philippians 4 is this – whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things. This is a call to fill our minds with godly content, with content that edifies. Do not settle for mindless entertainment, superficial photos, crude or offensive content. Your mind is made for more precious and wonderful things.

Conclusion

What we hold in our hands, though small, can exert unimaginable influence on our minds and our behaviours. We need to be on guard against our unchecked and undisciplined smartphone usage. But more so, we need to look deep inside to uncover idolatry in our lives. Has something or someone taken the place of supreme importance and love in our lives? Remember the three realities or promises described in 1 John 5:18-21 that are ours to claim when we choose to follow God.





Walking with Jesus our Peacemaker

TA Pastor-in-Charge, Rev. Chua Ooi Suah

"Walking with Jesus our Peacemaker," this is the three-year (2016-2018) theme that TA has initiated since 2016. We decided on this theme to remind church members of the importance of developing our spiritual life, such that we will constantly revisit the teachings and nurturing we have been receiving. At the same time, this theme serves to encourage collaboration among the members of the various ministries of the church so that we remain united with one mind and one goal in our spiritual journey. In this way, we can put in concerted effort in order to promote the church's ministry to expand God's kingdom.

In fact, through Christ, God has entrusted to us to be **"Christ's ambassadors,"** as reflected in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20:

"All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."

This is the role assigned to us by God, and it is our mission in life! **Walking with Jesus should be our lifelong goal and a lifetime endeavour.**

To walk with Jesus, we must first value our **reconciliation with God** through Jesus, and rejoice in our rebirth that is a result of His graceful forgiveness. Indeed, **restoration of our relationship with God is the beginning of the journey of faith and the foundation for the growth of life.** We are committed to the belief that God is the source of all life and goodness, and apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). Second, we, the chosen ones who are at peace with God, need to persist in our constant prayers and practices in order to be a good evangelist and His messenger as we devote ourselves to pursuing harmony. We must start with **"Peace with Ourselves"**. This is by no means easy to achieve, but it is critical. Only when we have peace with ourselves can we extend our peaceful relationships to brothers and sisters in our spiritual family! The Chinese idiom "a peaceful home is the foundation of everything" reminds us that **our spiritual family must first be harmonious internally, before we can consolidate our friendship and make new friends. This is also the foundation of a stable church!**

How the Father has sent Jesus, Jesus is sending us today (John 20:21). As faithful disciples of all ages followed Jesus' steps, we must also follow Him. Following the great commission of Jesus to make disciples of all nations, every believer should be **reconciled with the world!** We must live in the world as the salt and the light.

At the end of each Sunday worship, TA members will receive the blessings and sending forth from our God. This means that we will enter into the secular world and act as **ambassadors of the gospel.** We are the conduit between God and the world, bringing pre-believers to become disciples of Jesus.



Starting from August this year, the theme of our church is **"Peace with the world."** Thus, TA has specially arranged evangelistic training, lectures on the gospel, evangelistic camp and rally, among other activities. The main purpose is to strengthen our love of God, and love for the human souls, and to make evangelism a part of our daily life. Therefore, let us put together our effort to support the evangelistic effort of various congregations, and be united in sharing the gospel of Christ to bring people to the Lord.

Let us aspire to be a good disciple who is eternally faithful, continue to walk with Jesus our peace maker, and be a good messenger to spread the gospel!

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