

*digital edition*  
**GOSPEL  
LIGHT**

vol.  
**17**

may  
2011

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF  
CEBU GOSPEL CHURCH

宿務  
基督  
教會  
會刊

**務  
光**

上網版



主編：教會文字組  
發行：宿務基督教會

*Published bi-annually by the  
CGC Literature Committee*



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# FAITHFUL GOD, GRATEFUL HEARTS

Rev. Un Hock Wee

Deuteronomy 7:9—"Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands."

The word *faithful* is derived from the Hebrew root word meaning "to trust," or "to believe." This is the same root that gives us the word "amen." The derived meaning is that the one so described is trustworthy, dependable and stable. Every time we say *amen* we are really saying, "It is certain." or "Yes, it is absolutely true." He is our God whom we worship and is totally trustworthy.

## **I. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS** means...

.....what He says will always be true and He is able to keep his promises.

### **A. EVERY WORD GOD SAYS IS TRUE**

What do we have in mind when we talk of God's faithfulness? He means what He says; and what He says, he can fulfill 100 percent. God is 100 percent reliable all the time since the beginning up to eternity. This is because our God is 100 percent perfect and will remain perfect forever. Indeed, this is

one of God's great attributes.

When God warns us, He is not bluffing or trying to trick us so that we will take Him seriously. Neither is He trying to scare us, nor is He simply taking advantage of us. When God gives warning, He means business and we have to take it seriously.

Just like when God asked Jonah to preach in Nineveh because if not, the city will be doomed for destruction. Since the people repented, they were spared.

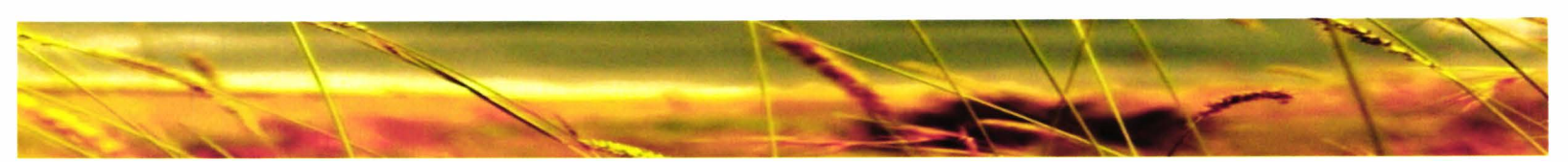
When Jesus said He will come again, indeed He will come.

Matthew 24:25 says; "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."

### **B. EVERY PROMISE GOD MAKES, HE KEEPS**

I was in a grocery store and heard a father and his son talking. The son told the father, "Promise is a promise. You promised me that you will buy this." Then the father replied, "I did promise but I did not say that I'm going to buy it."

God always mean what He says and He keeps all the promises He makes. When we talk about God's faithfulness, He is always true to His promises. How many of us can keep our promises? Before you



answer this question, let me rephrase it. How many of us do exactly what we promised? Let me rephrase it again. Of all the promises we make, how many do we keep? Do we make more than what we keep?

When we are in distress, remember the promise of God: “Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD” (Ps 27:14). When we are in a hopeless situation, take His promise and keep it in our hearts: “Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God” (Ps 42:11). When we are in need, just remember He will never abandon His children: “For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death” (Ps 72:12-13). Even when we are weak and lack the faith to believe in God, God will not change and will continue to love us and take good care of us (2 Tim 2:13).

If we are sensitive enough to know how God takes good care of us, write it down and surely, we will run out of papers. God indeed keeps His promises. Hence, it means that our God can fully be trusted and is truly reliable and dependable.

## II. GRATEFUL HEART

Since our God is 100 percent reliable, then our response must be ...

### A. WITH THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE

We must not keep it to ourselves but it must be expressed out to let the whole world know. We have to declare the goodness and the greatness of our God whom we worship. We have to admit and proclaim it publicly.

When good things happen to us, we have to reveal and let people know. Most important of all, to

Him who is our one and only true God. Our response must be done in a loud voice. Shout it out and tell the world how great and amazing our God is!!!

That is why Psalm 150 says, “Praise him with sounding of the trumpet, harp and lyre, with all kinds of musical instrument.” That is also why in Psalm 150 alone, the word *praise* appears 13 times. We have to praise Him for who He is and for His awesomeness.

The word *praise* is derived from a Latin word which means *reward* or *to give a prize*. When we praise, we are expressing the worthiness of God in His own nature. The word also means *to shine* or *make a show by raving and celebrating*. To praise the Lord is to *prize* Him and proclaim Him as the only one worthy of glory and honor.

### B. WITH A WORSHIPFUL SPIRIT

Not only do we praise our God with a thankful heart. We also honor Him by worshipping Him alone and being faithful to Him. This is because we have the ONE and TRUE LIVING GOD, and He will remain the same for eternity.

When God called Abraham to leave his homeland and go to the land that God has prepared, he simply packed up everything and brought his whole family there. Indeed, Abraham completely obeyed the Almighty God. Every time Abraham arrived at a certain place, the first thing he did was to build an altar to God and worship Him. He just wanted to praise and give thanks to God for keeping his whole family, servants and livestock safe. We know the desire of Abraham was to be with the Lord and to honor Him. We too must also develop a desire to worship Him daily, to show Him that we love Him and revere the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Indeed You, our Lord God, are worthy to receive glory and honor and power! May all the praise and honor be unto You, You and You alone!



# CHURCH LEADERSHIP:

## CHRIST, THE CORNERSTONE OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Pastor Eric Chan

Two years ago, we began our ministry with an emphasis on the theme “UNITY”. Our church theme for that year was “One Christ, One Church”. The following year, the Lord impressed upon us to focus on one important truth concerning Christians – All spiritual blessings come from Christ alone. Hence, our church slogan for that year was “In Christ Alone”. Now, we would like to embark on the theme of “church leadership, together with the role of each church member”. So, our church theme for this year is “Jesus Christ, the Church and Me”.

In line with this, we came up with three Church sub-themes:

1. CHURCH LEADERSHIP: Christ, the Cornerstone of Church Leadership.
2. CHURCH MEMBERS: The Body of Christ, Built from the Ministry of the Saints.
3. CHRISTIANS: United in Faith, Stable in Doctrine & Built-Up in Love.

This article seeks to focus on the first of three sub-themes, the topic on *church leadership*. John Stott wrote a wonderful book concerning this subject entitled, “Calling Christian Leaders”. Allow me to share a few excerpts from his book. Stott said,

Leadership is a word shared by Christians and non-Christians alike, but this does not mean that their concept of it is the same. On the contrary,

Jesus introduced into the world a new style of servant-leadership.<sup>1</sup>


Then he quoted Jesus' words found in **Mark 10:42-44**.

The secular world sees *leadership* as a person who leads and commands. Perhaps, we might say “a person who commands a following”. But Jesus clarified that biblical leadership calls for willingness to be of service to God and to others; consequently, they are not to seek privileges or prominence for themselves.

Honest to goodness Church growth is attainable only when Christians are motivated to take up leadership role. In **Ephesians 4:11-13**, Paul gave us this exhortation. “*Christ (It was He who) gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*”

Christians should come into the full understanding of Christ, and they need to comprehend the purpose of their salvation. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers were tasked to equip God's people. In Acts 6, the Apostles recognized the importance of their teaching ministry so they concluded and said, “*It would not be right*

<sup>1</sup> Introduction, *Calling Christian Leaders*, page 7



*for us to neglect the ministry of the Word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be FULL OF THE SPIRIT and WISDOM. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to PRAYER and the MINISTRY OF THE WORD."*

The office of the deacons was institutionalized much later. Apparently, like the "Seven" in Acts 6, deacons are to alleviate pastors of administrative works so that pastors may concentrate on the ministry of prayer, sharing of God's words, and watching over God's flock. The God-ordained purpose for pastors was and continues to be, for (the) training church members so that they may be mature in faith and equipped for ministry. Pastors are also tasked to unify the church in Christian faith and knowledge (Eph. 4:12-13). Therefore, self-promotion and political divisiveness run counter to the biblical ideal for pastoral ministry.

In our present time, we no longer have apostles or prophets, so the task of equipping rest solely upon those whom Christ had called to be evangelist, pastors and teachers. Perhaps, we might also include the "elders". For in **1 Timothy 5:17**, *elders* are tasked to direct the affairs of the church, and some are even involved in the ministry of preaching and teaching.

For this reason, Christians should acknowledge the chain of church leadership – elders, pastors and deacons have a definite role and they are linked to one another, with Christ Himself as the HEAD. Only then can there truly be an effective church leadership, which in turn would translate into church growth. Obedience to God's ordained purpose and will is of utmost importance in church ministry.

We urgently need a healthy, biblical understanding of the church, for only then shall we have a healthy, biblical UNDERSTANDING OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP. We must not define church in terms of its leaders (as the Roman Catholic Church does), but rather define leaders in relation to the church.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Conclusion, *Calling Christian Leaders*, page 91

<sup>3</sup> Conclusion, *Calling Christian Leaders*, page 91

<sup>4</sup> Conclusion, *Calling Christian Leaders*, page 91

The Book of Acts showcase Church Leaders as people who had professed faith in Jesus Christ, and who were believed to have been regenerated, who had been baptized (Acts 2:41, 2:44, and 2:47). In other words, they should have been subjected to Christ's saving grace and headship. Truly, for indeed Christ alone is "head over all things to the church, which is His body (Eph. 1:22)".

In the Matthew 16:18, Christ referred to Himself as the "rock" upon which Peter should build the church. This was seconded by Paul and Peter's teaching – that Christ alone is the chief cornerstone upon which God's household would be built (Eph. 2:20; 1Pet. 2:6). For this reason, the teachings of Jesus Christ and examples from Scripture should be the sole basis of church administration.

We must also renounce secular views of the church as if it were a merely human institution like any other corporate body, with human leaders wielding human authority, and being lionized as celebrities. All that has to go.<sup>3</sup>

In its place, we need to develop a godly view of the church as a unique community unlike any other, the redeemed and covenant people of God. In this community, ministers give humble service. There is no boasting about human beings, but all boasting is directed to God the Holy Trinity: to God the Father, who alone gives growth to the seed; to God the Son, who alone is the foundation of the church; and to God the Holy Spirit, who alone indwells and sanctifies the church.<sup>4</sup>

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen. (Eph. 3:20-21)

May God's name always be praised!



# CHURCH MEMBERS:

## THE BODY OF CHRIST (SUBTHEME #2)

Pastor Keren Tan

There is a widespread disease that plagues the churches in the Philippines. It cripples the growth of the gospel, humanly speaking, and its symptoms are common to all walks of life. It is easily identified when people are called to responsibility in ministry. Uncontrollable verbal gushes spring forth: *"I'm busy"* or, *"I don't have the gift of leadership"* or even, *"Let others do it, not me"* or more alarmingly, *"Leave it up to the pastors, that is what we pay them to do."* This outbreak is ubiquitous not only in the Philippines as it extends beyond geographical and cultural divide.

However, as I have discovered, this is not a case of the physical, but a matter of perspective. People are under the pretext that they neither have the capacity (*"I'm not gifted enough for ministry"*) nor the position (*"That is not my role"*) to take part in ministry. But these faulty mindsets have caused them to be inflexible, if not withdrawn from the community life of the church altogether. Because of our depraved nature, we shy away from taking part in gospel work. Thus, we need a significant paradigm shift in the way we do "church".

In 1972, a young man named William Carey—later deemed as the "Father of Modern Missions"—published an 87-paged manuscript entitled *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*. In it, Carey includes a treatment of Matthew 28:18-20 and argued against the prevailing view of the time that the Great Commission remains an


obligation of every Christian even after the apostles.<sup>1</sup> In part as a result of this book, the "Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Amongst the Heathen" (later renamed the Baptist Missionary Society) formed itself in Kettering, England, on October 2, 1792.<sup>2</sup>

Although the eighteenth century issue may no longer be controversial today, the implications are still relevant in our day and age. Sure, we should be sending out missionaries *"to the ends of the earth"* (Acts 1:8) and reaching the lost world for Christ. But is that *all* what Matthew 28 is calling us to do? Does this call apply to the local church, and to each disciple under the Good Shepherd's care? If we claim to be people of the Book, *i.e.* the Christian Scriptures, we need to examine the malady closely by revisiting the pathological point of where this may all have started, the Great Commission:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt. 28:18-20)

Carey certainly took the biblical standpoint when he proved that Jesus' instruction to "make disciples" is a mandate that is not exclusive to the apostles gathered





around Christ at the time of His ascension. Thus, Colin Marshall and Tony Payne expound the Great Commission clearly and rightly so:

The 'teaching' that the disciples are to do reproduces what Jesus himself has done with them. He has been their 'teacher'... and as Jesus has taught them... the disciples are now, in turn, to make new disciples by teaching them to obey everything commanded by their Master.

But what about 'going'? Traditionally... this has been read as a missionary mandate, a charter for sending out gospel workers to the world. However, this can lead local churches to think that they are obeying the Great Commission if they send money (and missionaries) overseas. But the emphasis is not on 'going.' In fact, the participle is probably better translated "when you go" or "as you go". The commission is not fundamentally about mission out there somewhere else in another country. *It's a commission that makes disciple-making the normal agenda and priority of every church and every Christian disciple.*<sup>11</sup>

Our God is in the business of saving and perfecting a chosen people for Himself through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; and we who are His redeemed children are privileged to take part in this great work that He is doing for His own glory. Consequently, the Great Commission passage speaks far more than just evangelism—bringing unbelievers to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ—for the command was simply to “*make disciples of all nations.*” The paradigm shift we need, then, is to bring the focus to where our Sovereign Lord puts it in the first place, *i.e.* discipleship.

Discipleship is “the ministry process by which a more mature Christian assumes the responsibility of intentionally leading others to God in Jesus Christ and

growing them in their knowledge of His will, their conformity to His Person, and their service to Him for His glory.”<sup>12</sup>

Contrary to the view that the works of evangelism and discipleship are two different but nevertheless related works, our examination of Scriptures actually tell us that these are actually one and the same gospel work. Evangelism is not discipleship, but it is the necessary starting point of discipleship.

However, neither evangelism nor discipleship is ever an end in itself. The goal of discipleship is “*to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ*” (cf. Eph. 4:11-16) and to “*present everyone perfect in Christ*” (Col. 1:28-29). In other words, the goal of discipleship is to help God's people unpack the gifts that God had blessed them with so that they may glorify God and delight in the Lord Jesus as they labor to do the work of ministry by grace.

Marshall and Payne are right to challenge us in this manner, “The church always tends towards institutionalism and secularization. The focus shifts to preserving traditional programs and structures, and the goal of discipleship is lost. The mandate of disciple-making provides the touchstone for whether our church is engaging in Christ's mission. Are we making genuine disciples of Jesus Christ? Our goal is not to make church members or members of our institution, but genuine disciples of Jesus.”<sup>13</sup>

If discipleship is what the Christian church is called to do, indeed every Christian, all the excuses that were mentioned earlier, whether it relates to capacity or position, have been rendered invalid. For as it is, to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be called to make new disciples. Thus, I echo the words of Marshall and Payne, “Are we making genuine disciples of Jesus Christ?”

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<sup>11</sup> Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and The Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift That Changes Everything*, Kingsford, NSW: Matthias Media, 2009, 11.

<sup>12</sup> “An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens,” *Center for Study of the Life and Work of William Carey, D.D.* 19 December 2000 [Accessed on 15 March 2011, from <http://www.wmcarey.edu/carey/enquiry/enquiry.html>].

<sup>13</sup> Marshall and Payne, 13.

<sup>14</sup> James Bryner Chu, “Pilgrim Project Proposal 2.5”, Unpublished Church Planting Manual, Manila, 2011, Appendix A.

<sup>15</sup> Marshall and Payne, 14.



# CHRISTIAN: UNITED IN FAITH, SPIRITUALLY MATURED, AND BUILT UP IN LOVE

Rev. Angelo Gutierrez

During my early years as a Christian, I witnessed a movement of people where many of my contemporaries have become transient worshippers of our church. They were the very active kind of church members yet suddenly their regular church attendance became inconsistent. Soon I found out that they were “trying out” other churches and see if they would fit in them. They would check out the programs, look for groups with similar interests, or even base their choices on who was the senior pastor of the church.

This movement was called “church shopping” or “church hopping”. People would visit at least two other churches and test the waters to see if they would benefit and grow in those churches. At one point, I became interested in trying out other churches and went church hopping myself. But later, I realized that it's not healthy either for me or for my home church.

First, the church is not about me, but about Jesus Christ. The church is composed of many people with Christ as the head and therefore should be God-centered, not me-centered. Second, God has placed me in our church for a purpose – a purpose not primarily to benefit me (though it is already a given) but to benefit the whole body. That's why in Ephesians 4:11-12, Paul tells us that each one of us were granted different set of gifts and all of us are to get ourselves involved in edifying each other.

### ***Become United in the Faith and Knowledge of Christ (v.13a)***

*“until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God”*

God grants us gifts with a purpose in mind, and Paul listed down some long-term goals in which all of us should be

aiming for. The first is to become united in the faith and in the knowledge of Christ. In this verse, faith does not mean the act of belief. It rather refers to the set of doctrinal truths about Christianity. The church in Corinth was a very good example of how disunity can sometimes come from doctrinal ignorance. When the believers are properly taught and faithfully guided according to the Scriptures, unity is to be expected. “Oneness in fellowship is impossible unless it is built on the foundation of commonly believed truth.”<sup>1</sup>


With this, it is expected that we are to be united in our knowledge of Christ. The full knowledge of Christ can only be attained through a constant longing and searching of the Scriptures and a continuing relationship with Him. The whole body of Christ should be motivated to have an intimate knowledge of Christ, and share their knowledge and experience to each other. Paul earlier prayed for the Ephesians “*that [they] may know him better*” (1:17). Paul also told the Philippians, “*What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ*” (3:8).

### ***Gain Spiritual Maturity (v.13b-14)***

*“and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.”*

The expected result of being well-founded in biblical doctrines and in the knowledge of Christ is spiritual maturity. Paul used the word infants to describe those who are

<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur, *Ephesians: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1986), 156.



spiritually immature. It is really fascinating to see how gullible little kids are when you realize how they can easily absorb quite a number of things.

I have a habit of using the Chinese word “跑” (pronounced in Amoy) in shooing away my daughter. And to my surprise, she was able to say it immediately after only using it once. Time and again my wife kept on reminding me not to use that word, and instead politely ask my daughter to go elsewhere. In this way, I am instructing my daughter in love rather than harshly treating her.

To respond to this threat, Paul tells the Colossians of his mandate to *“proclaim [Christ], admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in [Him]”* (1:28). Elsewhere, Paul admonishes Timothy to *“continue in what [he has] learned and has become convinced of”* for *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work”* (2 Tim. 3:14, 16-17).

With the advent of digital media and of the Internet, many so called pastors chose to popularize themselves by preaching doctrines and sermons that are contrary to biblical teachings. Since many people are not well-versed with the Scriptures, they are easily deceived by fine-sounding arguments. Having no thorough knowledge of God's Word, they are tossed here and there by waves of popular sentiment and are carried about by every wind of new doctrine that seems appealing. Because life in the world today is not getting any better, people would prefer listening to an agreeable sermon rather than a convicting one. Knowing this nature of men, Paul instructed Timothy of the coming days, *“Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage – with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths”* (2 Tim. 4:2-4).

#### **Build Up in Love (v.15-16)**

*“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”*

According to research published in January 2006, when a female ant of the species *Temnothorax albipennis* goes out to find food, she will often choose another ant to

accompany her. If the second ant doesn't know the way to the food source, the leader will teach her through a process called “tandem running.” As the teacher runs along the path to food, the student follows behind, often stopping to locate landmarks. That creates a gap between the leader and student. When ready, the student will run forward and tap the teacher on the back legs.

Ants participating in tandem running located a food source in an average of 201 seconds, while ants searching for food on their own took an average of 310 seconds. However, the process is detrimental to the teachers. Research indicated that the lead ants travelled up to four times faster when not accompanied by a student.

So why do leaders sacrifice their time and efficiency to teach others? According to Nigel Franks, the study leader, “They are very closely related nest mates, and their society as a whole will benefit.” This occurs as the students gradually learn their way and are able to teach other ants, which increases the efficiency of the entire population.<sup>2</sup>

Just as the ants do their part for the benefit and the efficiency of the entire population, Christians are to do things out of genuine love for God and His people, to benefit the body of Christ. Personal interests, ill motives, and hidden agendas have no place in Christianity. We do things because we love others. Love characterizes Christ's disciples. Having a good testimony that is lived out of love effectively edifies others. Teaching and guiding others into the truth out of love can be easily accepted by others. Admonishing others of their sins can be a tough thing to do. People don't like being reprimanded or rebuked by anyone. But when done in love, people will easily open up and listen to you.

And above all, the love of Christ should motivate us to do our part. Christ repeatedly told His disciples that His love for us and our love for Him moves us to obey His commandments. *“If you love me, you will obey what I command... If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching”* (John 14:15, 23-24. See also John 15:10; 1 John 3:16; 4:19).

People leave churches and go into another one with a variety of reasons. Aside from personal issues, Christian growth is always a two-way relationship – the church provides facilities and opportunities for growth and mobilization, the individual Christian provides himself to the church whenever the church needs him. It is true that we have to expect things from our church. But in the same way, as members, the church also expects us to play a part in improving and building each other up!

<sup>2</sup> Bjorn Carey, “Ant School: The First Formal Classroom Found in Nature,” FoxNews.com (January 13, 2006).



# THE CORD OF INSTRUCTION: OUR RESPONSIBILITY OF PASSING IT ON

Pastor Charmaine Gutierrez

Virtuoso violinist Jascha Heifetz was well-known for his distinguished performances in the 20th century. However, even after receiving such great recognition for his performing career, he decided to be a professor of music at UCLA. His reason was this: "Violin playing is a perishable art. It must be passed on as a personal skill; otherwise, it is lost."

I believe the same may be said for teaching Christian truths. The process of teaching Biblical truths amongst Christians can become a forgotten task if the believers dismiss its need. Of course, unlike violin playing, Biblical truths are never perishable. But like the skill of playing the violin, the discipline of teaching God's truth to Christians must be passed on, lest the accurate interpretation of the Bible be lost and misconstrued ideas about God further abound.

### **An Inspiring Illustration to Note**

A simple yet inspiring passage to note is Acts 18:24-28 as it gives a picture of responsibly passing on God's truth. These verses momentarily transition from one of the main characters of Acts, who is the Apostle Paul, to Apollos, someone who also went to some of the Roman cities that Paul visited in his second and third missionary journey.

Acts 18:24-28 (English Standard Version):

*<sup>24</sup>Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. <sup>25</sup>He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. <sup>26</sup>He began to speak*

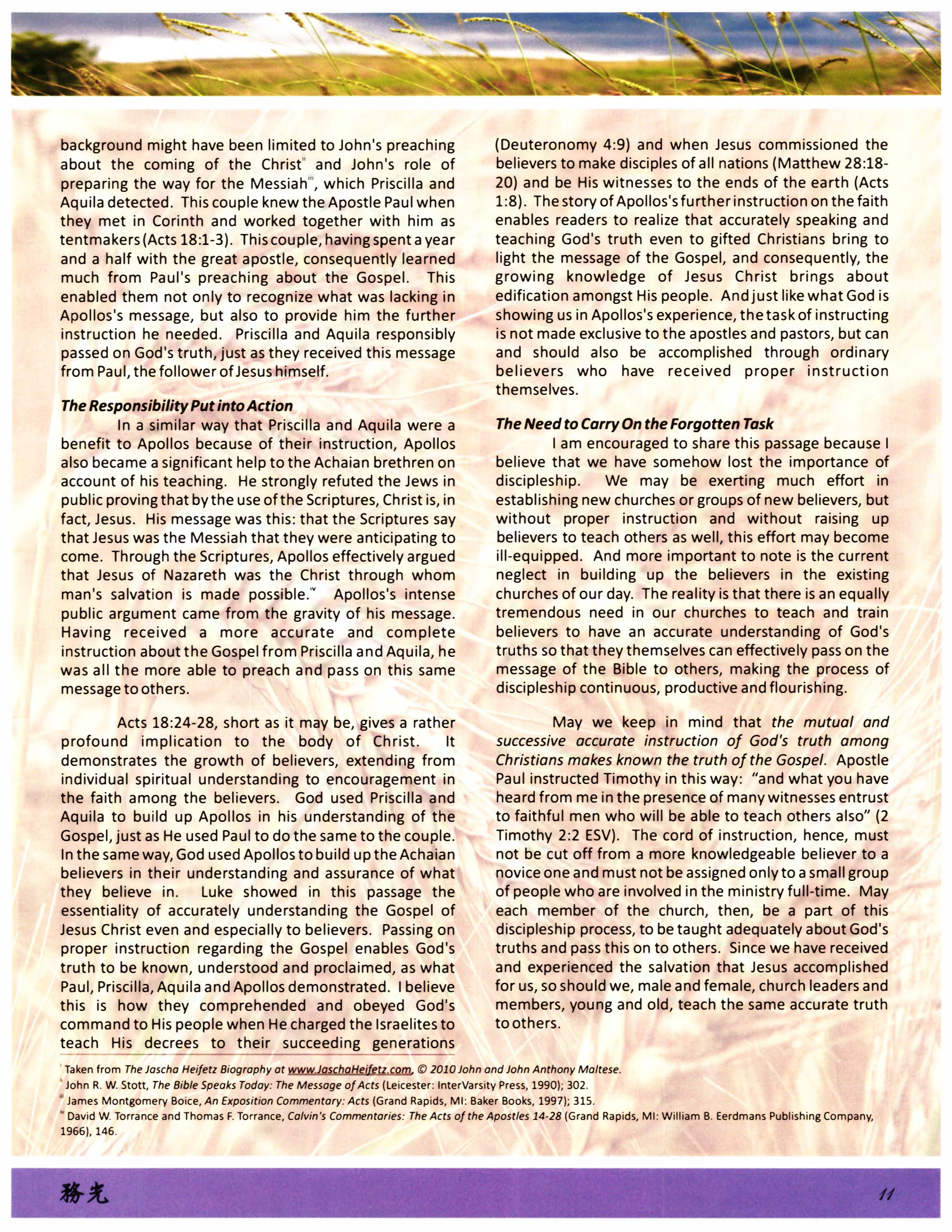
*boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and explained to him the way of God more accurately. <sup>27</sup>And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, <sup>28</sup>for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.*

### **The Outstanding Background**

It was between the time when the apostle Paul left Ephesus after a relatively short visit and before he came back to this city during his third missionary journey that a man named Apollos came and taught in Ephesus, the city known for its pagan worship of the Greek god Artemis. Apollos was a man of Jewish decent who was born in Alexandria where he became exposed to the teachings of the Scriptures. Here, in the capital of Egypt, was also where he likely learned to be eloquent or learned, given the education that was greatly available in this city. In addition, he also received oral instruction about Jesus Christ. With these knowledge and skills on hand, he came to the city of Ephesus and taught with great passion what he knew about Jesus.

### **The Unexpected But Precious Help**

Apollos's knowledge concerning Jesus Christ was impressive and he apparently did not restrict himself from passing this on to others in a thorough and careful manner. Nonetheless, this knowledge somehow needed further assistance. Apollos was not teaching an incorrect doctrine, rather, his knowledge about the Gospel was, in some way, incomplete. The phrase "though he knew only the baptism of John" in verse 25 gives a clue that Apollos's



background might have been limited to John's preaching about the coming of the Christ<sup>1</sup> and John's role of preparing the way for the Messiah<sup>2</sup>, which Priscilla and Aquila detected. This couple knew the Apostle Paul when they met in Corinth and worked together with him as tentmakers (Acts 18:1-3). This couple, having spent a year and a half with the great apostle, consequently learned much from Paul's preaching about the Gospel. This enabled them not only to recognize what was lacking in Apollos's message, but also to provide him the further instruction he needed. Priscilla and Aquila responsibly passed on God's truth, just as they received this message from Paul, the follower of Jesus himself.

### ***The Responsibility Put into Action***

In a similar way that Priscilla and Aquila were a benefit to Apollos because of their instruction, Apollos also became a significant help to the Achaian brethren on account of his teaching. He strongly refuted the Jews in public proving that by the use of the Scriptures, Christ is, in fact, Jesus. His message was this: that the Scriptures say that Jesus was the Messiah that they were anticipating to come. Through the Scriptures, Apollos effectively argued that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ through whom man's salvation is made possible.<sup>3</sup> Apollos's intense public argument came from the gravity of his message. Having received a more accurate and complete instruction about the Gospel from Priscilla and Aquila, he was all the more able to preach and pass on this same message to others.

Acts 18:24-28, short as it may be, gives a rather profound implication to the body of Christ. It demonstrates the growth of believers, extending from individual spiritual understanding to encouragement in the faith among the believers. God used Priscilla and Aquila to build up Apollos in his understanding of the Gospel, just as He used Paul to do the same to the couple. In the same way, God used Apollos to build up the Achaian believers in their understanding and assurance of what they believe in. Luke showed in this passage the essentiality of accurately understanding the Gospel of Jesus Christ even and especially to believers. Passing on proper instruction regarding the Gospel enables God's truth to be known, understood and proclaimed, as what Paul, Priscilla, Aquila and Apollos demonstrated. I believe this is how they comprehended and obeyed God's command to His people when He charged the Israelites to teach His decrees to their succeeding generations

(Deuteronomy 4:9) and when Jesus commissioned the believers to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20) and be His witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). The story of Apollos's further instruction on the faith enables readers to realize that accurately speaking and teaching God's truth even to gifted Christians bring to light the message of the Gospel, and consequently, the growing knowledge of Jesus Christ brings about edification amongst His people. And just like what God is showing us in Apollos's experience, the task of instructing is not made exclusive to the apostles and pastors, but can and should also be accomplished through ordinary believers who have received proper instruction themselves.

### ***The Need to Carry On the Forgotten Task***

I am encouraged to share this passage because I believe that we have somehow lost the importance of discipleship. We may be exerting much effort in establishing new churches or groups of new believers, but without proper instruction and without raising up believers to teach others as well, this effort may become ill-equipped. And more important to note is the current neglect in building up the believers in the existing churches of our day. The reality is that there is an equally tremendous need in our churches to teach and train believers to have an accurate understanding of God's truths so that they themselves can effectively pass on the message of the Bible to others, making the process of discipleship continuous, productive and flourishing.

May we keep in mind that *the mutual and successive accurate instruction of God's truth among Christians makes known the truth of the Gospel*. Apostle Paul instructed Timothy in this way: "and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2 ESV). The cord of instruction, hence, must not be cut off from a more knowledgeable believer to a novice one and must not be assigned only to a small group of people who are involved in the ministry full-time. May each member of the church, then, be a part of this discipleship process, to be taught adequately about God's truths and pass this on to others. Since we have received and experienced the salvation that Jesus accomplished for us, so should we, male and female, church leaders and members, young and old, teach the same accurate truth to others.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from *The Jascha Heifetz Biography* at [www.JaschaHeifetz.com](http://www.JaschaHeifetz.com), © 2010 John and John Anthony Maltese.

<sup>2</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today: The Message of Acts* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1990); 302.

<sup>3</sup> James Montgomery Boice, *An Exposition Commentary: Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997); 315.

<sup>4</sup> David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, *Calvin's Commentaries: The Acts of the Apostles 14-28* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1966), 146.



# THE CHOICE IS YOURS

Rev. Philip Co

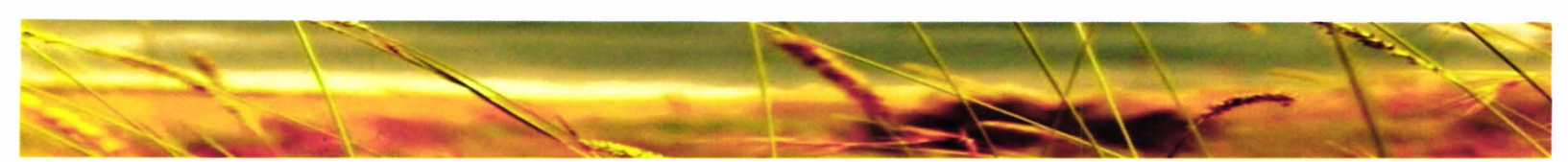
A story is told of a king and a wise man. The king was jealous of the wise man for he was very popular with the people. The king tried to think of a way to make the wise man look bad. One day he came up with a scheme. He summoned all his followers and sent for the wise man. The king asked the wise man, "Oh, wisest of men, tell me this. I have the tiniest of birds cupped between my hands. I command you to tell me if the bird is alive or dead?"

The wise man realized that if he said, "Alive," the king would give one quick squeeze and the bird would be dead. If he said, "Dead," the king would simply open his hand and release the bird. Either answer from the wise man would make him look bad. After pondering for a moment, the wise man finally replied, "The choice is in your hand, Your Majesty. The choice is in your hand!"

Choice is a powerful privilege but it comes with its consequence. We make choices daily. Some choices may seem rather trivial like the color of shirt to wear, the program to watch, or the food to order. They may not affect our lives in very significant ways. However, there are choices in life that may affect our destiny—career choice, spouse, moral path to take with regard to homosexuality, abortion, sexual relationship, integrity in the workplace, and many others. These could determine the outcome of our lives as well as the lives of other people.

In the Book of Deuteronomy, we see the people of Israel gathered at the plains of Moab and were about to cross the Jordan River and to possess the Promised Land as the covenant people of God. Their leader, Moses, was about to leave them behind. Thus, he encouraged and exhorted the Israelites to obey the covenant stipulations given by God in Deuteronomy 4:44–26:19 in response to His faithfulness and love toward them (Deut 1:1–4:43). How they responded, in obedience or disobedience, would be recompensed by blessings or curses respectively as outlined in chapters 27–28. Then Moses renewed the covenant with them in chapter 29:1-18 and predicted their future in general by setting forth the consequences of their disobedience in chapter 29:19-29 and the future restoration from the exile in chapter 30:1-10. Included in the hope of the restoration is the promise of the New Covenant (cf. Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:24-32) when God will circumcise their hearts so that they will love Him with all their being.

As you celebrate the 95<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary of your church, you can look back and attest to the faithfulness and love of God in your midst. Many lives have been changed and blessed by God. Quite a few had theological training and have been serving the Lord faithfully for years. However, for you and your church to continue enjoying the



many blessings of God for years to come, there should be a conscious effort to choose rightly. From Deuteronomy 30:11-20, we can learn timeless principles about the choices we make.

**A. Right choices must be based on the clear, revealed Word of God (vv. 11-14)**

Right choices are possible because of the accessibility of God's will to us as found in His Word. We have the commandment of the Lord made even more accessible to us that we do not need to obtain an oracle from any gods through divination, consulting fortune tellers, fengshui masters or horoscopes, or going far and wide to retrieve any secret messages. The fact is that the Word of God has been brought so near to us that we can discuss with our lips and meditate upon it in our hearts. We ought to read it carefully and be guided by what has been revealed to us if we are to make right choices in our lives today. As the Scripture says in 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

**B. Right choices involve loving and obeying God (vv. 15-16a; 17, 20)**

Moses could only present to the people life and prosperity (lit. the good; cf. 26:11), or death and destruction (lit. the evil; cf. Jer 7:6; 25:7), blessing or curse. The choice, however, belongs to the people. The choices, as well as their consequences, have been set in the clearest and simplest terms in verses 15-18. If the people will love God and obey His commandments, then they shall be blessed in the land; if they will not love and obey Him, they shall perish from the land. The route to blessing is couched in three terms that describe the manner in which we are to make the right choice. We are to choose rightly by loving God, by walking in His ways, and by keeping His Word. Elizabeth Achtemeier noted that "Israel is called to love Yahweh with the love of a son for his father. Thus Israel's love is to be a devotion which flows spontaneously and freely from the heart, in gratitude and response to Yahweh's fatherly love."

Such love must be expressed by walking in His ways and by keeping all His commandments. Jesus expressed the same idea in John 14:15 and 21: "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." The commandments provide the details of what a loving response to God looks like in practical life. Furthermore, the term "cling" in verse 20 is used to describe the manner of choosing in a more intimate way. It implies a decisive, irreversible commitment to God. It cannot merely be the whim of a moment, but must be the commitment of a lifetime.

**C. Right choices lead to God's blessings in life (vv. 16b, 18-20)**

Observe carefully that the consequence is intertwined with the choice. So Moses not only presented before the people the choices, he delineated the corresponding consequence to each choice they made. As the Israelites chose to love and to obey God, they were also choosing life and prosperity. Conversely, when they chose to turn away from God and worship idols, they were choosing death and destruction for themselves. Richard Clifford expresses the idea of life and death in the following statement: "Because the speech is liturgical, i.e. done 'before Yahweh,' life and death has a specific meaning. Life in the liturgical context is proximity to the Lord, . . . Death means to be absent from the Lord, and from the land where he dwells. Blessings and curses mean essentially the same as life and death—to dwell with the Lord and enjoy him through his land, or to be cast out of his land to live in the lands of strange gods."

Members of Cebu Gospel Church, you may not be in the land of Israel, yet God has blessed you right where you are. Treasure the Word of God. Study, teach, meditate and apply it in your lives. Love God above all else so that you may experience His bountiful blessings rather than having your "lampstand" removed from its place.



# GRATEFUL HEARTS FOR OUR FAITHFUL GOD


Mona Li

“This is the Day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:24). Indeed, there was much rejoicing when we celebrated Cebu Gospel Church's 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary. On Saturday evening, March 12, 2011 at Grand Convention Center, our Thanksgiving dinner was held with so much joy and excitement. Around 600 guests and members attended the grand affair with the first 200 registrants receiving early bird specials of mini tool sets or foldable ecobags. The evening program started quite promptly. Momentum kicked in with a short Thanksgiving message by Rev. Philip Co, followed by a musical extravaganza by the renowned violinist, Professor Shang Quan of Brisbane, Australia. Dinner was then served. Meanwhile, excitement began to build up as 3 batches of 25 minor prizes were raffled off in between the song and dance numbers by our very own Joybell Singing group, Soul Searchers and PCGS drama club. After dinner, we once again enjoyed the beautiful and sweet music of Prof. Quan. Aptly and with the outpouring generosity of our elders, church council and church members, a total of 95 prizes were to be given away, 20 of which were major prizes. Everybody patiently as well as expectantly stayed on as physical presence was needed to claim the prizes! Of course, some went home with more material

blessings than others but nobody went home empty-handed. Heart-shaped night lights were souvenirs for everyone and for those who wanted to capture their 'kodak' moments, a photo booth had been set up. Indeed, it was a night to remember and many thanks to the organizing committees who worked tirelessly to make this celebration truly a memorable one. Culmination was on March 13, 2011 at our Sunday Worship Service with Rev. Philip Co as special speaker and wonderful music by the children of our Sunday school as well as our Church Choir. We had another chance to appreciate two musical pieces by Prof. Shang Quan and again I had goose-bumps all over my arms. What a great day it was for our beloved church! With grateful hearts, we thank our ever faithful God.

How time flies! For it seems like only yesterday when we celebrated our 90<sup>th</sup> church anniversary by proclaiming God's faithfulness through the years. Remember the triple G - God's Great Grip? In that miraculous moment when we accept Him to be our Lord and Savior, He holds us by our wrists so that in times of weakness and weariness, even if we let go of His hands, the connection will not break. Even more wonderful is the fact that “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). God makes it





so easy for us sinners to go back into His bosom, perhaps too easily from a human point of view. Somehow, we seem less forgiving toward those who wronged us. While we eventually accept whatever apologies that come our way, sometimes it takes us just a wee bit longer than what would be considered as magnanimous. Thankfully that is not the way our loving God works, for 'because of God's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail, they are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness' (Lamentations 3: 22-23). Indeed, our gracious God is faithful – yesterday, today and forever.

As we celebrate our 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I thank God for the privilege of being a part of this big happy family called Cebu Gospel Church. To be a member of the second oldest Chinese church in the Philippines is, for me, God's providence. I first came to know God, His love and tender mercies inside the pillars of Cebu Christian School. Mama Rose was a Roman Catholic but she chose to enroll us at CCS simply because it was a Chinese school and more importantly, just a stone throw away from our rented apartment on Junquera Street. Not only was it more convenient for Mama to keep an eye on the five of us, she was able to save on transportation expenses. There was no oil crisis then and fares were cheap, but still Mama Rose carefully handled the hard-earned money Papa Awing sent from afar. No, Papa was not an OFW but rather an OSW (over the seas worker) as Papa Awing worked as the general manager of Yankee Trading in Surigao City. It was inevitable that we would be exposed to Protestant teachings while studying at CCS. Again, it was God's providence that Mama willingly allowed us to join all the religious activities, including extracurricular ones. We attended CYF and became members of the "Now Generation" singing group.

It has been 40 years since I was baptized in this very church and publicly declared Christ as my personal Lord and Savior. Loving me and all of us the way He

does, we can't help being eternally grateful for His mercies. How then do we, mere mortals, show our gratitude to an omnipotent God? Of all the Bible stories that I've heard and been told, 'the widow with two mites' is still one of my favorites. Why? It shows what a gracious God we have. For Christ to value the two mites of the widow more than all the money put in together by the rest of the people, including the rich ones, has inspired and will always inspire me to give only the very best to Him. All of us are wonderfully yet differently made and there will always be greater and lesser persons than ourselves. For to whom much is given, from him much will be required (Luke 12:48) and to those who think they have less, remember the widow with two mites. Praise God for what matters most to Him is that we give all that we have and all that we are to Him joyfully and with grateful hearts.

The celebration for our church's anniversary is over, and as we take a breather to assess all that has happened, we should not forget that the race is still on towards a century of existence. Maybe it will be aptly called as 'The Celebration of A Century'. Lord willing, all of us will still be here to celebrate such a grand occasion. What gift do we plan to bring this time or do we come before Him empty-handed? People around the world are suffering because of natural calamities, disasters, political upheavals and financial crisis. Now, more than ever, we need to share this great news that all is not lost if we have Christ, the Almighty God, in our hearts. 500 members attended our 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, if each of us could bring in one new member in the next 5 years, a thousand members by 2016 would be attainable, but is this the best we can offer God? At the end of our races in life, can we look straight in God's eyes and echo Paul's words by saying: I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith (2 Timothy 4:7). Will we hear His sweet reply: 'Yes, indeed you have, my good and faithful servant.' To God be the glory!!!

# An Irreverent Look at the History of CHRISTIANITY

A SPECIAL SERIES BY THE IRREVERENT HISTORIAN

## PART 4: WHEN GREAT EMPIRES COLLIDE

Welcome to the fourth of our irreverent history series on the history of Christianity. We hope to eventually cover the origins, development, and current state of Christianity. We try to provide a general understanding of the topic – so, what you read here will be quite general. We try to cover history in general terms and present the majority view, but our research is not perfect. Brickbats (and much more preferably bouquets) can be directed to our e-mail address at [history@cebugospelchurch.com](mailto:history@cebugospelchurch.com).

In our previous installment, The Jews endured 80 years of exile in Babylon, but were allowed to return to Jerusalem when the Persians took over. Although they were now part of an empire, they had complete autonomy and religious freedom. With walls rebuilt and Temple restored, life seems to return to normal. But Jerusalem lies at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe, and such peace will not last for long...

**T**he Persian Empire, also called the *Achaemenid Empire*, is the largest in the world at this point in history. At the peak of its power, it controlled 8 million square kilometers of land spanning three continents, including parts of Greece, Russia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and the entire Middle East and Egypt.

Controlling such a large territory is not easy. So the Persians simplified communications by adopting a common language, Aramaic, for the region. This is the same language Jesus would speak. To make it easier to govern, the Persian empire was divided into provinces called *satrapies*, administered by a governor called a *satrap*. Satrapies are given a lot of freedom, but are not fully independent. They still needed to remit tax collections to the empire. The amount due was reasonable and based on each territory's ability to pay. For example, the very rich city of Babylon had to contribute 1,000 silver talents (a talent weighs about 67 pounds) and four months of food supply per year.

Under the Persian empire, Judah was known as the satrapy of *Yehud*. Jerusalem, its administrative center, was a very small city. Modern historians estimate Jerusalem's population at that time to be around 1,500; the entire province had no more than 30,000 people. *Zerubbabel*, a descendant of one of the last kings of Judah, was Yehud's first satrap.

All in all, the Jews were free to govern themselves and worship their God. This liberal practice came from the Persian belief in *Zoroastrianism*, a monotheistic religion that prohibited slavery. While it is replaced by Islam in modern-day Persia (Iran), some people in India still practice it.

### The Greco-Persian Wars

Persia has a long history of war with the city-states of Greece. Known as the birthplace of diplomacy, Greece is located in southern Europe, bordered by the Mediterranean Sea in the South and the Aegean Sea to the west. To support its growing population, the Greeks established colonies in *Asia Minor*, known today as *Turkey*. These colonies are where the Persians first confronted the Greeks, when Cyrus the Great conquered them and added them to his Empire.

The Greeks didn't set out to liberate their colonies outright, but they encouraged the colonies to revolt. The *Ionian Revolt*, fomented by the city of *Athens* and *Eretria* in 499 BCE, took the Persians six years to put down. Darius the Great, then king of Persia, vowed revenge against Greece.

He struck in 492 BCE, first sending his son-in-law to secure a land route to Greece. Once that was done, Darius sent ambassadors to the city-states, demanding that they surrender. Two cities, Athens and Sparta, chose to fight – they killed Darius' ambassadors instead of sending a reply.

A Persian fleet set out a year later to occupy the Greek mainland. The expedition captured Eretria and burned it to the ground. It then landed in the bay of *Marathon*, some 42 kilometers from Athens. But despite their greater numbers and lack of support from Sparta, the Persians were shockingly defeated in the pivotal Battle of Marathon. Athenian soldier *Pheidippides* was said to have run from Marathon to all the way Athens to announce their victory, and then collapsed and died. This is why the marathon has such a strange length today.



Darius was building up a second army when he died in 486 BCE. His son and successor Xerxes raised a massive army. He then ordered two floating bridges to be built across the Hellespont – the traditional boundary between Asia and Europe. The army marched off towards Greece in 481 BCE.

The second Greco-Persian War started with a series of Persian victories. After winning the Battle of Thermopylae, the army marched westward towards Athens. The Greeks evacuated the city, and the victorious Persians burned it to the ground. Xerxes then set his focus on *Peloponnesus* peninsula, where still-defiant Sparta was located.

The second expedition met shocking defeat in the naval battle of Salamis. The Athenian-led Greek navy ambushed and inflicted heavy losses on Xerxes' much larger fleet. With victory no longer certain, and not wanting to stay away from Persia for too long, Xerxes pulled back most of the army to Asia. He left a general in charge to hold their gains, but the now-smaller army was obliterated a year after.

Having liberated the mainland, the Allied Greeks marched on towards Asia, retaking several of the colonies previously conquered by Cyrus. The war went back and forth for several years, and even extended as far as Egypt. Fortunately for the Jews, it never reached Jerusalem. Peace came only in 449 BCE, after 30 years of intermittent fighting.

The bloodshed would have a big impact a century later, on a warrior-king who lived in the Greek city-state of Macedon. Born to King Philip II and his fourth wife Olympias in 356 BCE, and tracing his ancestry to the legendary Greek hero Heracles, Alexander appeared to be destined for greatness.

**The Macedonian King**

The Kingdom of Macedon is located in Northeast Greece. While it shared the language and culture of the Greek city-states, Macedon had a unique style of government – the other city-states were democracies, but Macedon had a hereditary monarchy. Thus, the Greeks didn't completely trust the Macedonians or consider them as 100% Greek.

Macedon was a vassal state of Persia during the Greco-Roman war, and gained independence after Persians were driven out of Greece. After peace with Persia, the city-states went back fighting among themselves for influence and power. They became easy prey for the Macedonians.

**ANCIENT NEAR-EAST EMPIRES**



Although politically unimportant, Israel stood at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe. Naturally, it formed part of the territory of any ambitious Empire in the region.



Alexander's father prepared the country well. He armed his foot soldiers with a heavy two-handed lance more than double the length of the existing weapons. The cavalry were given the best and most powerful horses. Philip also paid his soldiers a salary, creating the world's first professional army. Previously, armies were populated with drafted conscripts or mercenaries. With his well-trained and motivated army, Philip brought Greece under his control.

Philip groomed Alexander to be his heir, providing him with military training. Alexander's tutor Aristotle taught him the sciences, philosophy, and theology. Legend has it that a horse trader brought a fine massive black horse to sell to Philip. However, the horse was too wild, so nobody could control it. Except for 13 year old Alexander, who noticed the horse was afraid of its own shadow. After turning it towards the sun where it couldn't see the shadow, he managed to tame it. The astonished Philip bought it for Alexander, who named the horse *Bucephalus*.

Philip was preparing to go to war with Persia, using revenge (for Xerxes' attack over a hundred years ago) and liberation of the Asia Minor colonies as his excuse. Before he could begin, he was assassinated by one of his bodyguards in 336 BCE. Alexander ascended to the throne of Macedon at the age of twenty, and had to postpone his father's campaign. Several city-states took Philip's death as an opportunity to break free from Macedonian control, and it took Alexander two years to reestablish Macedon's dominance.

Finally free to focus on external enemies, Alexander gathered up an army of over 40,000 soldiers, and crossed the Hellespont into Asia. It was time to make Persia pay.

### Conquest of Persia

King Darius III did not pay much heed to the Macedonian incursion at first. His army was many times bigger. The Macedonian army was strong on land, but didn't have a strong navy. It would be easy to blockade the enemy's supplies. Finally, they were led by this... young and inexperienced boy!? What had he to fear?

In fairness to Darius, his position wasn't completely secure. He was sitting on the throne in Persepolis only because his last two predecessors, *Artaxerxes III* and son *Arses*, were poisoned to death — by the same man who then installed him

as king of Persia. Although he had nothing to do with the murders, there would have been rumors about his involvement that would weaken his authority. Finally, the satrapies of Egypt and Babylonia were rebelling against Persia, so he could not give Alexander his full attention.

Alexander started his campaign by conquering the port cities of Asia Minor. He realized that without places to launch their ships from (to hit Macedon), the Persian sea advantage was useless. Alexander was methodical but merciless: any city that dared resist is destroyed, and the people killed or sold as slaves. In many ways, the "civilized" Greeks who viewed Persians as barbarians were complete hypocrites.

His first major battle against the Persians occurred in the banks of the Granicus River, against the satraps of Asia Minor and a few thousand hired mercenaries from Greece. Alexander was a hands-on leader, and preferred to fight alongside his men. He personally led the royal squad of the elite Companion cavalry, even when charging the enemy. The young king was almost killed in this battle.

Alexander's subsequent victory made Darius sit up and pay attention. This boy wasn't a pushover like he thought! And now, he must personally go and fight the upstart king himself! While Alexander consolidated his gains in Asia Minor, Darius raised an army. Both sides finally clashed in 333 BCE near the town of Issus.

Much like the Battle of Granicus, the Battle of Issus took place on the banks of the Pinarus River where its strong current make it difficult for anyone to cross. But Alexander crossed it anyway, leading the cavalry charge. He went straight for Darius, but the king escaped. When Darius left, morale sank and the Persian army collapsed. Humiliatingly, Darius' mother, wife, and children were all captured in this battle (Alexander treated them well).

Darius' retreat to the East gave Alexander a free hand to go to Egypt. On the way, he stopped to massacre the resisting cities of Tyre and Gaza. He was met in Jerusalem by a priestly procession that supposedly showed him the book of Daniel (chapter 8 would be a good passage to show him). He didn't touch the city, and chose instead to offer sacrifices (properly!) to the God of the Jews.



**ALEXANDER THE GREAT ON BUCEPHALUS**  
Detail from the Alexander Mosaic depicting the Battle of Issus.

Alexander continued on towards Egypt, which surrendered without a fight. He was greeted as a liberator by grateful (or perhaps fearful) Egyptians, and crowned as Pharaoh. His lasting legacy in Egypt was to create the city of Alexandria, populating it with his wounded and veteran soldiers. It is the second-largest city in Egypt today.

Of course, Alexandria, Egypt wasn't the only city the Macedon king founded (or named after himself). There is also Alexandropolis (*Bulgaria*), Alexandria-in-Troax (*Turkey*), Alexandria-in-Aria (*Helmut, Afghanistan*), Alexandria-in-Arachosia (*Kandahar, Afghanistan*), Alexandria Eschatê (Tajikistan), Alexandria-in-Margiana (*Turkmenistan*), and many more... Humble, he ain't.

Alexander's vacation in Egypt gave Darius enough time to raise another army. Darius had a lot of time to think about his past failure, and this time he left nothing to chance. He recruited the best soldiers from the Persian Empire, and ordered the battlefield to be flattened. This way, his scythed chariots could move freely unlike in the muddy banks of Granicus or Pinarus.

In 331 BCE, Alexander fought Darius again near the village of Gaugamela, now modern-day Mosul, Iraq. Alexander's army was outnumbered 2 to 1, but at least his men were well-rested. Darius' army was kept awake the night before, fearful of any surprise attack.

What happened at the *Battle of Gaugamela* changed the course of modern history, but nobody knew what really happened that day. Some say Darius panicked again after seeing Alexander go straight for him. Others say his men deserted en-masse. The Macedonians were victorious.



**KING DARIUS III**  
Detail from the Alexander Mosaic depicting the Battle of Issus.

The victorious army swept into the unprotected capital of the Persian empire, and plundered the royal treasury. In an unfortunate turn of events, a drunken Alexander "accidentally" set fire to some buildings in Persepolis. But since only the Palace of Xerxes was completely destroyed, it was likely an act of arson, revenge a long time in coming.

Darius fled East, hoping to raise yet another army to turn back the invaders. This time, his luck ran out. He was murdered by his own satrap. The murderer crowned himself *Artaxerxes IV* and briefly fought Alexander's army before he was captured and executed for regicide.

Darius' death in 300 BCE marked the end of the Persian Empire. Alexander gave the king a state funeral, and completed his ascension as the King of Asia by marrying Darius' daughter. The Greeks' revenge was complete, but that wasn't enough for Alexander. He went further east, and pushed into India, adding more territory to his empire and exterminating anybody who dared resist.

Alexander's own men were running out of patience. Persia was destroyed, mission accomplished They had been in Asia for nearly ten years, and they missed their families in Europe. What were they doing here in this weird place with scary war elephants? Only loyalty and Alexander's personal charisma kept those feelings in check.

In our next installment of the Irreverent History series, we promise less history and more religion! We see what finally stopped Alexander the Great's march to conquer the world, and what changes the destruction of Persia does to the Jews. Coming soon, only in Gospel Light!

# LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

Compiled by: Pastor Rosaline Lim

## Thank You, Lord!

Some people have this notion that Thanksgiving Day is the "day" to say thank you or be grateful and that is why we celebrate it.

Thanksgiving Day is to remind us that we have to thank God and the people who have helped us, be they our family, friends, drivers, or complete strangers.

It is also a reminder of God's faithfulness towards us, how He showed His love to us through His Son (undeserving though we may be), giving us inner joy and peace in the midst of uncertainties that surround us, hope in every challenge we meet, faith to cling on when troubles and temptations come, for giving us blessings

that we may also share them to others, and for His overflowing grace that helps and keeps us going every day.

Last 25th of November 2010, our church celebrated Thanksgiving. We were grateful to have Dr. Harold Sala as our speaker that evening.

We thank God for all the Fellowships that He has bestowed us. To show our gratitude to Him, each Fellowship rendered different special numbers to our Lord.

May we always be grateful of our lives whether in laughter or in tears.



## Baptismal

There were 16 candidates (10 candidates from our mother church, CGC and 6 candidates from her daughter church, MGC) who surrendered their lives to our Lord Jesus and were baptized last November 28, 2010. They were: Julianne Liana Co, Erwina Chan, Jendrick Shawn Chan, Charles Joshua Chiu, Beverly Amanda Gothong, Redh Edgar Christian Honoridez, Hannah Samantha Key, Grace Kim, Joelia Marie Lee Yu, Daveric Daniel Ong, Clarinda Noreen Sy, Nelson Calvin Sy, Jacqueline Mae Tan, Gladys Leslie Robins Uy, Irvin Edu Valenzuela and Tina Wu.



We would like to encourage each and everyone to continue on interceding for these newly baptized members and welcome them to God's family. May we set good examples to them as they grow in the Lord.



## “Proclaiming Christ” by Dr. Joseph Shao

Dr. Joseph Shao came to share our third quarter theme “Proclaiming Christ” last November 28, 2010. Sadly, many who call themselves or thought that they were called to become “preachers” or “pastors” hardly mention Christ’s name in their messages. No gospel is found in their sermons and mostly, they talk about happiness, success, blessings and other trivial things instead.

Proclaiming Christ in this present time is not easy because there are different teachings that are being taught or that different beliefs have come out that confused people. Because of this, people don't want to listen to other “teachings” or “beliefs”.

For those who are really called into this ministry, let us stay faithful to the Word of God & stop those “motivational

messages” which can deceive instead of leading people to Christ.

**James 3:1, “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.”**

May this passage remind us of our accountability to God and to others as teachers of God's Word.

## Christmas—Choir Cantata



*May the spirit of Christmas bring you peace.*

*The gladness of Christmas give you hope.*

*The warmth of Christmas grant you love.*

*—Author Unknown*



*Jingle bells ... jingle all the way..... deck the halls with boughs of holly fa la la la ... la.*

Christmas is always one of the most awaited season for everyone.

Excitement and bustling noises surround you.

People are caught up in buying gifts and preparing for festivities. Gatherings, reunions and parties are happening every where. This is the season that excites us. But the real deal is that in spite of all the bustling activities, can the world still remember why we are celebrating Christmas? We may have heard the story of the birth of Christ so

many times that sometimes we don't want to hear it any more. Often we forget why God sent His Son— it was to save us from this chaotic and condemned world and that we may not perish eternally.

Last Dec. 19, 2010, the church choir gave a short cantata. One of the songs entitled “Sing Gloria Tonight!” reminded us how heavens rejoiced when our Savior was born to bring peace to all mankind.

## Induction of New Diaconate



We praise God for choosing a new leader to serve Him and for the reelection of past deacons and deaconesses so they can continue their calling to serve.

Being a church leader is not an easy calling. If you look at the dictionary, the word *deacon* means “to wait” or “waiter”, meaning to serve others.

Many don’t know the real meaning of the word *deacon*. Some think it means “church leader” or a higher position in the church or someone who has authority.

To be a deacon is to have the privilege to serve God & the church though it may not be a perfect one. It is a way to let others know that serving God and people is a fulfilling experience, a way to do more things for Him. May we run the race not just because of the prize but to give back what is due Him.

Congratz! Dea. Gilbert Yap and to the re-elected.

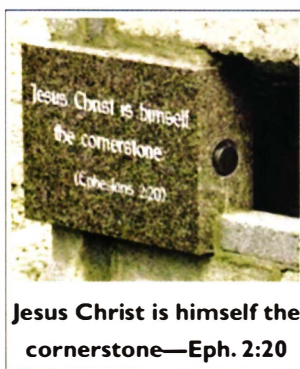
## (2011) 1st Theme Seminar : “Christ, the Cornerstone of Church Leadership” by Dr. Stewart Young

On Sunday, January 30, 2011, Dr. Stewart Young came and shared to us the first theme entitled “Christ, the Cornerstone of Church Leadership”.

not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive...” (1 Tim. 3:2-4 ).

should be the one to set good examples and be trained so that they will know more of God’s Word.

What really is the qualification of a church leader? The Bible tells us that in order to become one, he must be “above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome,



Moreover, he should know God’s word well and not just by knowledge but by heart and discernment.

No matter how “good” you are but if Christ isn’t part of your goodness, it’s just good for nothing. To help the church grow not only in numbers but in quality , the church leaders themselves

A person is called by God and is chosen by His people because he or she is qualified, not because they are good friends or that person is rich and gives big to the church but rather they are right for the job. Sad to say, many church leaders do not really understand what leadership means nor do they make Christ as their cornerstone. They depend on what they know and have. God gave His Son in order that the leaders of the church will follow His example and make Him their foundation.

## Child Dedication

February 6, 2011, a little baby girl was dedicated to the Lord by her parents, Jonathan & Sharon Teyu. This little bundle of joy is named Zara Sofia Teyu.

May we keep little Zara in our prayers that she will grow beautifully in the Lord and that she will be used by God to fulfill His plans.

This child is surely blessed for she was born in a Christian home. May her parents guide her in the way of the Lord and that she may not depart from His Word.

The Bible teaches parents to guide their children well and discipline them in God’s way, not their way. As Proverbs 23:13 says, “Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod,

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.  
Proverbs 22:15

he will not die.” Instead, it corrects & imparts wisdom to the child—but if we give them the wrong “love”, the child will become a disgrace to his parents (Prov. 29:15).



## PCGS Sunday

Cebu Gospel Church celebrated Philippine Christian Gospel School (P.C.G.S.) Sunday last February 20, 2011. Pastor Angelo Gutierrez shared God's Word that Sunday morning, reminding us how blessed the teachers and students are for belonging to a Christian school. That they have this special privilege to get to know more of Christ and how a Christian community works.

Indeed, it is true that we are very blest by

God for the chance to study and grow up in a Christian school and hopefully, we can be blessings to others and share God's Word to them even as we leave the pillars of the school; and of course, set good examples to those who are in need of Christ and all



those who don't know Christ at all.

To God Be the Glory!

**95TH ANNIVERSARY  
 CELEBRATION!  
 "FAITHFUL GOD,  
 GRATEFUL HEARTS!"**

*"With a grateful heart, with a song of praise, with an outstretch arm, I will bless your name. Thank you, Lord. I just wanna thank you, Lord ..."* - Don Moen.

"Faithful God, Grateful Hearts" was the theme of our 95th church anniversary. Truly, God has been so gracious and faithful to our church for the past 95 years. Surely, there is no such thing as a perfect church, for people have their own opinion, have their own points of view and are of different characters and personalities; but, the important thing is that Christ is in the midst of the church and through Him, there is unity, love and respect for each other.

God always has a purpose in every challenge He allows the church to go through. Question is how do we respond? Do we mock the church, leave the church, criticize, fight or add more problems to the church? Or, do we pray for the church, help find solutions, encourage one another? Most important of all, do we depend more on God and ask wisdom and discernment from Him? There will be adjustments to be made but are we willing to meet half way in order to achieve it?

I grew up in this church and have been serving the church for quite sometime now. I saw people come and go. There are lots of changes.....old buildings made new..... new leaders elected and groomed..... I saw how the church faced trials & challenges and witnessed how God's sufficient grace allowed the church to reach 95 years. If God isn't with us, surely we wouldn't make it through 95 and still going. Pride, selfishness and politics can destroy not just the church but each other's relationship. May we ask God to give us teachable hearts, humility and God fearing church leaders and members.

Last March 12-13 of 2011, the church celebrated her 95th anniversary. A thanksgiving dinner hosted all the members and guests as they celebrated with gratefulness to God at Grand Majestic Convention last March 12, 2011.

Guests from different Chinese churches in the Philippines (Luzon, Visayas & Mindanao) came and celebrated with us on this special occasion. There were at least 50 guests who attended the said event. 75 minor prizes and 20 major prizes were raffled away.

We are very thankful to all the donors of the prizes. May God continue to bless you.

Sunday, March 13, 2011 was the church's

anniversary worship service. The church was fully packed with members and guests. Young children from the Sunday School Department offered praises to God by a song number and an interpretive dance number. It was so fulfilling to see their faces lit up and smiled while singing.

Rev. Philip Co was the anniversary speaker and he said that we are truly blessed — that God has allowed us to reach such long years of existence.... that we have each other working hand in hand and running the race together to accomplish God's work.

May we realize how truly blessed we are by God through His faithfulness. Let us not forget to show our gratitude towards Him every day of our lives.

*With a thankful heart  
 We will give You praise  
 You've been so good  
 Covered us with grace  
 You have been our strength  
 In a time so dark  
 So we worship You  
 With a thankful heart*

*So we lift up our praise  
 And we lift up our sacrifice to You  
 Lord we offer our prayers  
 And we offer our lives in gratitude  
 For all You do  
 We worship You  
 With a thankful heart*

Don Moen

# YEAR 2006 IN PICTURES



## CHURCH THEME

**Pursuing Excellence After God's Own Heart** 信實長、務恩揚

THEME VERSE: Hebrews. 13:20-21

*- Hebrews 13:20-21 talks about God giving us peace through our Lord Jesus, equipping us that we may do His will and what is pleasing to His sight. May we pursue excellence for God's glory as he equips us to do His will.*

## MANDAUE GOSPEL CHURCH

Cebu Gospel Church - Mandaue Branch started it's Sunday Worship Service on January 5, 2006.

## CHILD DEDICATION

*Children are blessings from God. They are treasures more precious than jewels or any gems. How parents rear them is also important as they can show them the right kind of love.*

*May the parents of these children nurture them well and raise them up the way God has commanded them to. They should also remember their accountabilities toward God.*

The following children were dedicated to the Lord: **Justeen Faye Avellana, Tom Kenley Ledesma, Caitlin Deene Ong, Hans Gabriel Saw, Jonathan Ryan Tio, Lyle Kristoff Castro, Cian Dimitri Chua, Jayden Christoffer Chan, Marina Penn See Diet, Michelle Paige See Diet**



## 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

"PROCLAIM GOD'S ENDURING FAITHFULNESS"  
信實長、務恩揚  
THEME VERSE: PSALM 100  
BY: REV. MICHAEL TSANG

*- This passage tells us to thank our Creator for giving us the privilege to be his "sheep in the pasture" and for being faithful to us. That is why the psalmist tells us to make a joyful noise, serve God with gladness, come into his presence with singing, enter his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praises in our mouths – because the Lord is good, his steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generation. (Ps. 100) May we also be faithful to Him and the generation that follows us.*

## BAPTISM

*Baptism symbolizes an announcement to the public that you have accepted Christ as your Lord and personal Savior and that you are now part of God's family. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." (2Cor. 5:17) Once a person is baptized, he should realize that his old-self (old ways or habitual sin) is gone and new-self (changed life) has come. When you're being immersed in the water, it symbolizes that you have died with Christ, your old-self is buried together with him; and when you come out from the water, it symbolizes your new being in Christ.*

From Cebu Gospel Church, the following were baptized:



❧

Jimmy Avellana, Christine Chua, Jan Erika Go, Faith Alexis Oh, Lorraine Elizabeth Ong, Philma Yap, Gina Claire Ng, Hannah Joyce Matutina, Harrison Chua, Berkley Ng, Jeremey Jay Po, and Justin Greg To Chip

❧

...and from Mandaue Gospel Church,



Erwin Colina, Peter Po III, Maria Tolosa, Lynnette Uy, Christine Uy, Iris Hannah Yap,



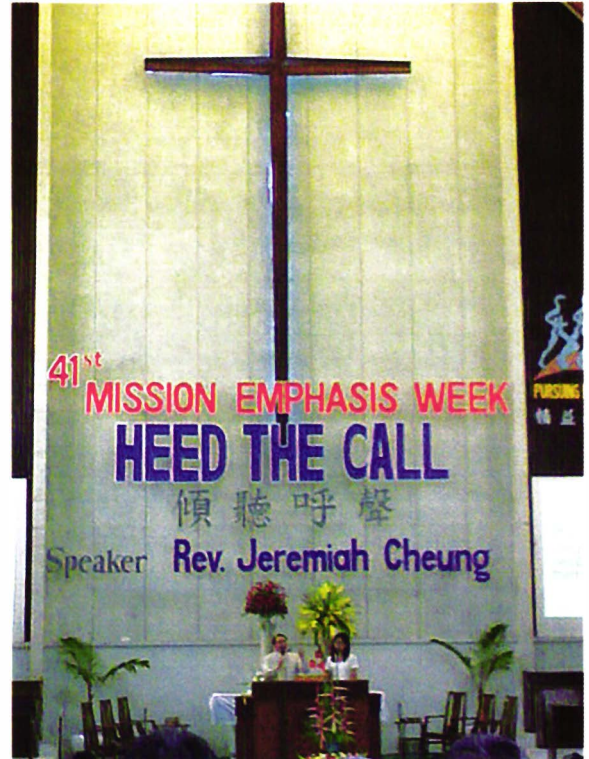
Edward John Colina, Lorenz Colina, Evelyn Go Colina, Frank Ngo & William Ngo

### **NEWS IN BRIEF**

- ★ 1st Evangelistic Meeting held at MGC on March 19, 2006 with Rev. Danny Reyes as Speaker
- ★ 10th CBDTI Youth Summer Conference at Dumaguete City entitled Youth Extreme Challenge
- ★ CGC Mission Committee held a Medical Mission at PCGS on Aug 5, 2006 and the 1st JLY Medical Mission held outside of Cebu at Hilongos, Leyte last July 8, 2006
- ★ 2nd Evangelistic meeting in MGC by Rev. Jeremiah Cheung



ACCF Couples' Enrichment Retreat at EGI Maribago, Mactan



**Mission Emphasis:**

**Heed the Call**

**傾聽呼聲**

by Rev. Jeremiah Cheung

- ★ 10 delegates from CGC completed the cross cultural mission exposure training by the Christian Bible Church of the Philippines (CBCP)
- ★ Elder Peter Yap represented our Mission Committee in visiting the church mission work in China on Oct. 11-15, 2006
- ★ The following had been elected as Deacons and Deaconesses for the year 2007-2009-Tiong Khing Ong, Henry Tiu, Philip Uy, Tony Yap, Irene T. Ong Magdalena Po, Jenny Ting and Lily K. Young.
- ★ Evangelism Explosion-Using Evangecube
- ★ 1st MGC Family Retreat last Dec 2006



Our church pastors and 16 church members joined the 7th Chinese Congress on World Evangelization (CCOWE) in Macau last July 17-21, 2006

# YEAR 2007 IN PICTURES

## CHURCH THEME

Devotion To God, Compassion For Men

敬虔於神、仁慈於人

THEME VERSE: Matthew. 22: 37-39

- Matt. 22:37-39 is a very familiar passage for us: "love the Lord with all your heart ... and love your neighbour as yourself". A very easy command given to us but a difficult one to follow. How can people love God with all their heart, mind, soul & strength when they are easily consumed by all the happenings and things around them such as technologies, movies, gadgets, business, leisure, and success, among others. When it comes to serving in the church, so many reasons are given just to be free from their responsibilities.
- How can we have compassion towards others when we easily keep track of other's faults, when we tend to look down at others or think that we are better than others. Where is the compassion? **Christ showed compassion to those who needed it, not tear them down.** Joseph was thrown into a cistern and sold by his brothers but he showed compassion to them. Never did he show vengeful attitude nor was he spiteful – that's compassion for men. How can we have an impact towards others when there's no compassion? And how can people see Christ in our lives when compassion is not seen nor felt?



## MGC THEME: Family for Christ



CGC 1st Joint Worship Service with MGC during our Congregational Sunday



## 91<sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY

"SPREADING THE GOSPEL WITH ONE HEART & ONE MIND"

同心合意、興旺福音

THEME VERSE: Phil. 1:3-6

BY: REV. CHUA CHI

- Paul told the people in the church of Philippi how grateful he was to them for praying and supporting him from the beginning of his ministry even when he was in prison. The church in Philippi shared the gospel just as how Paul had taught them from the very beginning and still continued in spite of Paul's predicament. Paul had hoped that Christians today would share the same gospel.

## CHILD DEDICATION

The following children were dedicated to the Lord: **Sandee Rae Ledesma, Yael Gwayne Lopez, Isaiah Jameson Tan, Keith Dominic Yu, Diana Alexandra Gothong**

## NEWS IN BRIEF

- ★ Baptism(CGC)-Mark Vincent Chua, Eugene Dy, Jefferson Tan, Carl Andrew Sy, Clarence Aaron Sy, Aaron Lemuel Ong, Robert Hansford Ching, Sarah, Tio, Michelle Tio and Gail Leslie Uy
- ★ Baptism(MGC)- Jeanne Uy and Diosdada Oscars
- ★ Operation:Jesus Loves You(JLY) Medical Mission at Sogod, Cebu
- ★ CGC Youth Summer Conference on April 9-14, 2007 at MGC. Main Speaker was Ptr. Terence Lim entitled "Because of Christ...I am, I can, I will" 因著基督、我是、我會、我要。
- ★ We welcomed Dr. Jeanne Caramoan, Rev. Yu Bon Kim and Mrs. Aida Yu and Ptr. Rosaline Lim to serve in our church

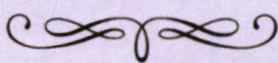
- ★ "Lead like Jesus" training on April 2-3, 2007 at El Salvador, Danao City. 22 youth leaders from our church attended the training
- ★ Dr. Wanda Po Liam Giok and Ptr. Alice Huang went to Han Zhou, China for a short term mission on April 18-27, 2007
- ★ Dr. Jeanne Caramoan went with 4 of our young people to Vigan City for a short term mission while 41 youth delegates from our church attended the 32nd FCCF nationwide summer youth conference in Baguio City
- ★ Children Ministry Conference conducted by the Scripture Union for the Sunday School Teachers at PCGS on April 12-14, 2007. Topic- 52 Creative Ideas to teach Bible Stories to children
- ★ Starting July, 2007 Good News TV program could be viewed at Skycable channel 74 in Cebu



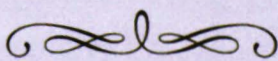
### Mission Emphasis:

**Passion for Souls**  
**熱愛靈魂**  
by Dr. Allen Lim

## CHURCH HAPPENINGS



- ★ MGC Evangelistic Meeting by Prof. Allen Lim
- ★ MGC held once a month Equipping Sessions
- ★ DVBS-Star Quest 亮星追尋
- ★ Rev. Danny Reyes conducted a special seminar on "Filipino Chinese Youth Culture1" 菲華青年文化 1 last Oct 27, 2007
- ★ The following were elected as Deacons and Deaconesses for the year 2008-2010-Alexander Te, Philip Yap, Nixon Po, Emmanuel Ong, Mona Chang Li, Rose Marie Su Castro, Jane Jane Ong and Josephine Que Yu.
- ★ Junior Winter Camp on Dec. 26-28, 2007 at MGC



CGC Choir gave a presentation entitled "Who is this Child?" on Dec 23, 2007 during Worship Service



MGC Children's Choir rendered their Christmas presentation on Dec 16, 2007

# YEAR 2008 IN PICTURES



## CHURCH THEME

**Take Root Downward, Bear Fruit Upward**

向下扎根、向上結果

THEME VERSE: Isaiah. 37:31

*- God's Word should not be only head knowledge but should be allowed to saturate our lives so we can please and glorify God.*

**MGC THEME: To Proclaim Christ**



## CHILD DEDICATION

The following children were dedicated to the Lord:  
**Percival Andrei Yap,**  
**Mikayla Louise Yap,**  
**Christian Dean Ong**

## 92<sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY

**"SERVING AND LOVING"**

服事與愛慕

THEME VERSE: John 13:1-5

by DR. DAVID CHEUNG

*- Jesus came down to earth not to be served but to serve. This is an example for us Christians to follow. Sad to say, we always have this attitude of diffidence; conscious of who is in the higher or lower position. Christ is Lord, King, Saviour and Prince of Peace, yet he washed the dirty feet of his disciples without any hesitation! What about us? Does money or position really matter when it comes to serving & loving Him? Can we still be called Christ's disciples if these things matter to us?*







### **Baptism(CGC)**

Dereik Micah Po, Nathaniel Isaac Yu, Catherine Mae Chua, Charmaine De Leon, Lorelee Gayle Ong, and Joanah Uy

### **DVBS**

Treasures Unlimited  
無限的財寶



- A special seminar was conducted by Rev. Danny Reyes on "Filipino Chinese Youth Culture 2" last on January 26, 2008
- CGC Membership Committee organized Senior Citizens Outing last Feb 7, 2008 at Guba, Talamban

☞ Sister's fellowship held an evangelistic meeting on March 25, 2008 at the CGC Auditorium. Topic was "Diabetes: Causes and Cure" with Dr/Ptr. Jeanne Caramoan as speaker.

☞ Baptism(MGC)-Tirso Go and Tan siu Tuan

☞ Musical Concert by the Covenant Singers last April 30, 2008 entitled "Songs of Faith"

☞ Welcomed Ptr. & Mrs. Eric Chan, Ptr. Keren

Tan, Ptr. Angelo and Ptr. Charmaine Yu Gutierrez to serve in our church

☞ Seminar entitled "Biblical Principles of Church Leadership" by Rev. David Cheung on June 28, 2008

☞ The renovation of our Sunday School building started last July, 2008

☞ The CYF celebrated its 60th anniversary



Kian Kee 60th Founder's Day Grand Alumni Homecoming

⇒ CGC Musical Evangelistic Meeting by Rev. Lui Shiau Ting/Lao Sam of Good TV Ministry last Oct. 25, 2008

⇒ Donations were sent to the Szechuan Earthquake victims in China

## SPECIAL SEMINARS

- ◆ BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH LEADERSHIP  
從聖經原則看教會領袖  
- REV. DAVID CHEUNG
- ◆ FILIPINO YOUTH CHINESE CULTURE 2  
菲華青年文化 2  
- REV. DANNY REYES



**Mission Emphasis:**  
Christ's Mission, our Mission  
基督宣道、你我使命  
by Pastor Jay Banzuelo



**2009-2011 DEACONS  
AND DEACONESSES**

*Lorenzo Ong, Jr.  
David Johnson Tan  
George Tan,  
James Young  
Lili Gothong  
Merry Lourdes Lee Yu  
Julie Sy-Tio*



1st MGC Christmas Cantata

- ✓ Billy Graham's evangelistic video training program
- ✓ Unicable Destiny started broadcasting "GOOD TV" on Channel 78



CGC Christmas Cantata

# YEAR 2009 IN PICTURES



## CHURCH THEME

**One Christ, One Church**

唯一基督、合一宣道

THEME VERSE: Ephesians 4:4-6

*- As we become part of God's family, we are assigned to different and specific tasks. We have roles to perform as Christ's body – Christ is the head, some of us may be the feet that help bring people the good news in different places; we may be the hands that help others who are in*

*need, not to pin point the mistakes or weaknesses of others; an eye to see who needs help and not to look down on others; the mouth that spreads God's Word which gives life to others, not to gossip and tear someone down; a heart that shows compassion and forgiveness, not to be hostile and arrogant; and we may be the ears to listen to someone who wants to be heard or pour his hurts out, not to eavesdrop and cause problem - this is the Church. When Christ is not "inside" the Church then it is not called Church, it is just a building.*

## CHILD DEDICATION



Johana Cassidy To Chip



Dior Justine Gothong

## BAPTISM (CGC)

Kate Marielle Aviso, Harold Reg Aviso, John Davidson Tan, Jed Earl Go, Samuel Eliezer Uy, Fredric Carl Te and Edward Dybuco



Queenilyn Jane Ang,  
Arthur Louie Ong,  
Dominic Daniel Ong,  
Sharleen Dianne Ong,  
Denzel Matthews Po



**CEBU GOSPEL CHURCH** An Evangelistic Dinner  
**宿務基督教會**  
 PRESENTS **93rd Anniversary CELEBRATION**  
 Guest Speaker: Rev. Danny Reyes  
 Theme: Hope in Life

**93<sup>RD</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
 "HOPE IN LIFE"  
 人生的盼望  
 by REV. DANNY REYES



Inauguration of the newly renovated Sunday School building

FCCF Nationwide Summer Youth Conference  
 "Get Real"  
 2 Corinthians 13:5, 8  
 Pastor Jay Banzuelo, Rev. Stephen Tan  
 Baguio City



happy counselors:



5th Youth Camp  
 "Lost in the World...Found by Christ"  
 失落於世、基督尋得  
 by Ptr. Jebo Banzuelo  
 March 30-April 4, 2009  
 Cremdec Taptap, Busay

**CHURCH HAPPENINGS**

- ☺ Mission Emphasis Theme-One Christ, One Mission  
 唯一基督、合一宣道  
 by Rev. Philip Ong
- ☺ Joint Sunrise Service last April 12, 2009 at 6am, MGC
- ☺ 3rd Worldwide Chinese Women Mission Conference  
 "For a Time like This" held in Taal Vista Hotel, Tagaytay City

**SPECIAL SEMINARS**

- ★ Title: "Christ:Greatness of the Gospel"  
 基督福音偉大  
 Date: Feb 7, 2009  
 By: Dr. Stewart Young
- ★ Title: "The Sufficiency of Christ"  
 基督福音齊備  
 Date: May 30, 2009  
 By: Ptr. Jay Banzuelo
- ★ Title: "Church:Together for the Gospel"  
 教會福音全群  
 Date: July 25, 2009  
 By: Rev. Philip Co
- ★ Title "Community:Taking the Gospel  
 to the World"  
 社群福音遍傳  
 Date: Oct 24, 2009  
 By: Dr. Joseph Shao of BSOP



### DVBS

God's Big Backyard  
神的後院



### OUTREACH

- ◆ Donation to Typhoon Ondoy's Flood victims in Manila
- ◆ The Membership Committee held a Free Executive Panel Check up for church members who are 45 years old and above last August 16, 2009
- ◆ Medical and Dental Outreach at Maguikay Elementary School in Mandaue City and a Medical Mission held at the Mandaue Sport Complex last Nov., 2009



3rd Year Anniversary of MGC Ladies' Fellowship



### INDUCTION OF THE NEW DEACONS AND DEACONESSES FOR 2010-2012

- Anthony Lim*
- Alexander Oh*
- Daniel Ong*
- Hyman Yap*
- Elena Go*
- Helen Go*
- Nancy Ong*

# YEAR 2010 IN PICTURES

## CHURCH THEME

**In Christ Alone**

唯在基督

THEME VERSE: Colossians 1:28-29

- *The passage tells us to be cautious about false teaching (teaching a different Christ). Paul says that it is impossible to become perfect Christian nowadays because we are still living in this sinful world with our sinful flesh. We could only attain perfection when Christ returns; in the meantime Christians should know what they believe in and stand by it rather than be tossed to and fro by immaturity. Christ should be the centre of our message, not what others say, think, or want or feel, but what the Bible says. The great commission tells us to preach the gospel (Salvation) that others might be baptised in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*



## CHILD DEDICATION



Emmanuel Edralin, Chris Ryan Chua, Robin Alec Ho, Elizabeth Joanne Guanzon King, Kenzie Rhys Li, Karl Richard Lim, Nathaniel Poh Tiu

Laura Dei Castro and Jerisch Valenzuela







## 94<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

“IN CHRIST ALONE”

唯在基督

THEME VERSE: John 3:16-21

by DR. JOSEPH SHAO



Evangelistic Play  
“No Greater Love”  
天下父母心  
Chancel Repertory  
PCGS Gymnasium  
March 6, 2010



- A love story between an ungrateful daughter and her parents who sacrificed so much so she can finish school and be a successful entrepreneur someday. The daughter became famous but hid her real life from her boss, workers and even from her fans. One fateful day, her life nearly ended but because of her mother's great love, she bled and gave her blood just to keep her daughter alive. This is an illustration showing how much God loves us by sending His One and Only Son to die for our sins – Christ's sacrificed His life for us even though we don't deserve it.



## BAPTISM



Sis. Au Chay Hong, Julianne Liana Co, Erwina Chan, Jendrick Shawn Chan, Charles Joshua Chiu, Redh Edgar Christian Honoridez, Beverly Amanda Gothong, Daveric Daniel Ong, Jacqueline Mae Tan, Gladys Leslie Robins Uy, Irvin Edu Valenzuela

November Shine Ang,  
Jade Michael U. Presbitero,  
Nicole Dy,  
Victoria Belle Ong,  
Mary Diane Po,  
Melody Hope Lee Yu



PCGS 62nd  
founding anniversary  
1st Golf-Tournament  
Fellowship-CKKAA  
@ Cebu Country Club



**"Christless Christianity"**  
April 5-9, 2010 • Bacolod City



**DVBS**

The Armor of God 神的軍裝



Junior Camp "You are God's Masterpiece" June 2-5, 2010



Membership Committee held its Senior Citizen outing last Aug 6, 2010 for church members who are 60 years old and up



MGC 1st Summer Mandarin Camp



The Soul Searchers and the Band went to Surigao Gospel Church for a Musical/Evangelistic meeting last Oct 22-23, 2010



## Mission Emphasis

"Proclaiming Christ"

宣揚基督

by Rev. Jay Hallowell

*Every year, the theme of our Mission Emphasis week tells and reminds us and our missionaries that there are still so many lost souls that need to be saved. Christ's Greatest Commission to every believer is to "go to every nation and preach the GOSPEL" so that people may be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Christ's mission is to save the lost and it is our mission to spread His word so that others may have salvation. As we share the Word of God, may we faithfully and accurately do so by preaching the right gospel. May our mission be Christ-centred and not self-centred, focusing on what we can give and be a blessing to others because of Christ.*

## SEMINARS

- ◆ Biblical Perspective on Parenting  
聖經透視之養育  
by Dr. John Tse  
April 24, 2010
- ◆ "Love Christ", "Serve Christ" and "Proclaim Christ"  
愛慕基督, 事奉基督, 宣揚基督  
by The Christian Education Committee
- ◆ Learning Basic Amoy  
(Chinese Vernacular Dialect)  
by Rev. Philip Ong
- ◆ Theological Education by Extension (TEE)  
"Inductive Bible Study"  
歸納式查經  
by Rev. Philip Co



MGC Family Christmas Celebration and Cantata last December 2010

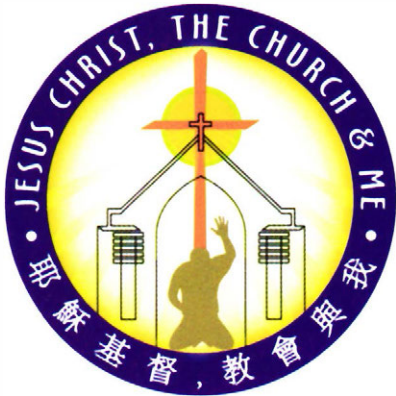


CGC Christmas Cantata 2010



Induction of 2011-2013 Deacons and Deaconesses:  
 Tiong Khing Ong, Tony Yap, Gilbert Yap, Henry Tiu,  
 Jocelyn Uy-Po, Irene To-Ong, Magdalena Po, Jenny Ting and Lily K. Young

# YEAR 2011 IN PICTURES



## CHURCH THEME

Jesus Christ, The Church & Me 耶穌基督、教會與我

THEME VERSE: Ephesians 4:11-16

*— Christ gives specific and appropriate spiritual gifts to each individual and it is our duty and responsibility to know how to use them in the right way. He can take it away from us if we neglect it or use it wrongly. As members of a church and Christ body, unity, harmony and maturity are needed to accomplish God's purpose. We should be accountable to the tasks that have been entrusted to us. May we be the solution rather than the cause of problems.*

## CHILD DEDICATION

Zara Sofia Teyu



Sisters' Fellowship  
60th Anniversary Celebration  
February 2, 2011



Joybells Gospel Team



The Soul Searchers



PCGS Students



The Grand Raffle Draw



Grand Prize Winner of a 40" Sony LCD Bravia TV with home theater: Sister Joyce Uy



The Usherettes

# 宿務基督教會 九十五週年慶典

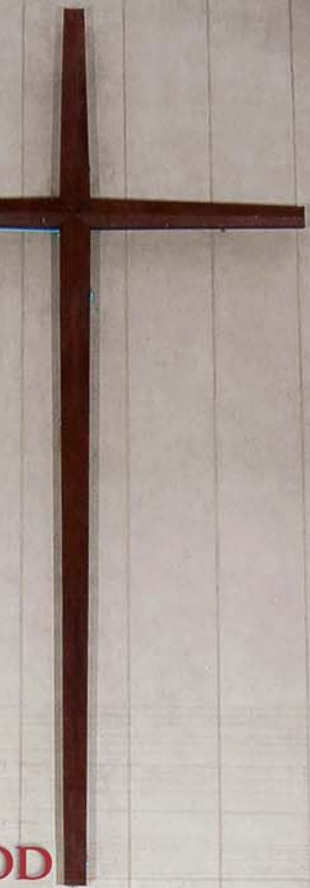
FAITHFUL GO  
GRATEFUL

Cebu Gospel Church  
95th Anniversary Celebr  
March 12-13, 2011

信實的神  
感謝的心



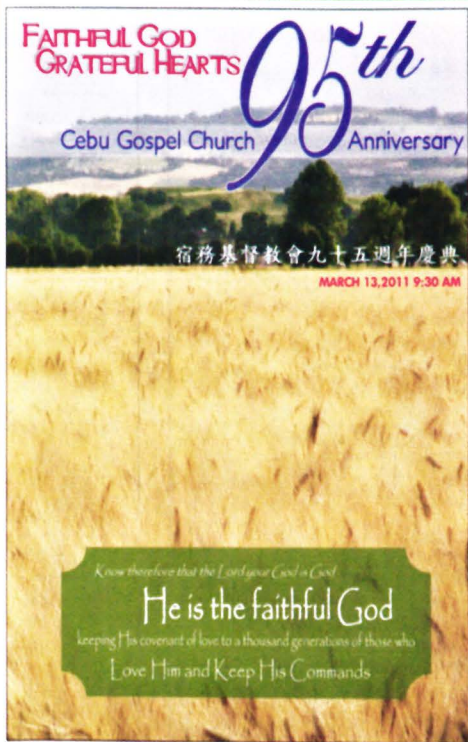




OD  
HEARTS

rations





## 95<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

“FAITHFUL GOD, GRATEFUL HEARTS”

信實的神、感激的心

THEME VERSE: DEUTERONOMY 7:9

BY: REV. PHILIP CO

- THE PASSAGE REMINDED US THAT OUR LORD IS GOD. A GOD WHO KEEPS HIS COVENANT. A GOD WHOSE FAITHFULNESS AND UNWAVERING LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE GOES ON FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION AS LONG AS THEY KEEP HIS COMMANDS AND LOVE HIM. MAY WE BE GRATEFUL TO OUR FAITHFUL GOD WHO SEES US THROUGH NOW AND FOREVER. TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

Thanksgiving Dinner  
Cebu Grand Convention Center  
March 12, 2011



Master of Ceremonies: Elder Frank Sy & Ms. Penelope Ong



Prof. Shang Quan



Elder Peter Yap



Rev. Philip Co

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE ♦ MARCH 13, 2011



Cebu Gospel Church Choir



Prof. Shang Quan



Rev. Un Hock Wee



Pastor Eric Chan



Our Guests



Joybells Gospel Team

Sermon Speaker: Rev. Philip Co  
Interpreter: Pastor Alice Huang



Special Number by the Sunday School Kids



The Congregation



Sunday School Dancers



Sisters' Fellowship volunteers and their assistants who lovingly prepared the daily snacks for the kids.



Teachers and assistant teachers

**DVBS**

Exploring God's Wonders in Space  
April 11-15, 2011

*Everyone had a blast learning about God's mighty power and His amazing love.*





# NINETY~FIVE

Compiled by Stevenson Q. Yu

This article is brought to you by the number 95, to commemorate the 95th Anniversary of our church!

π to 95 digits: 3.14159265358979323846264338327950288419716939937510582097494459230781640628620899862803482534211



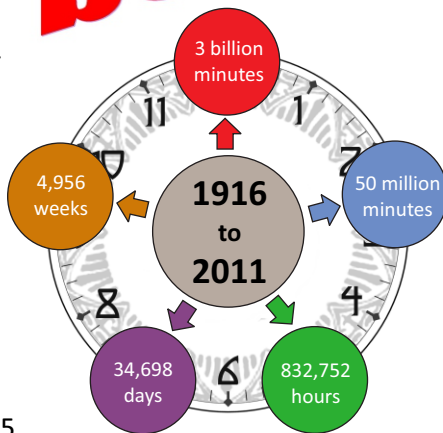
95 children returned to Jerusalem from Babylon after the Exile

Ezra 2:20, Nehemiah 7:25

How to write 95 from Base 2 to 36

2	1011111	11	87	20	4F	29	38
3	10112	12	7B	21	4B	30	35
4	1133	13	74	22	47	31	32
5	340	14	6B	23	43	32	2V
6	235	15	65	24	3N	33	2T
7	164	16	5F	25	3K	34	2R
8	137	17	5A	26	3H	35	2P
9	115	18	55	27	3E	36	2N
10	95	19	50	28	3B		

**be** 95th word in the Bible (KJV)



In 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to a door of the Wittenberg Castle church, sparking the Protestant Reformation



**Am**  
95  
Americium  
Element #95  
A synthetic, highly radioactive element widely used in smoke detectors.

**April 5** is the 95th day of a non-leap year.

On this day:

- The **Cold Food Festival** is celebrated in China, Korea, and Vietnam.
- 1614. **Pocahontas** (native American princess) marries colonist John Rolfe.
- 1947. Born, **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**, 14th Philippine president.
- 1955. **Sir Winston Churchill** resigns as British Prime Minister for health reasons.
- 1975. Died, **Chiang Kai-Shek**, President of Taiwan.
- 1987. Debut, Fox TV Network.



Microsoft **Windows 95**, released in 1995 (of course!), was a groundbreaking evolution of the operating system.



"Wisley 2008" Rose

95 petals



- **Joseph Barbera**, co-founder of the Hanna-Barbera animation studio
- **Norman Borlaug**, scientist, Father of the Green Revolution
- **Mark Felt**, "Deep Throat", Watergate whistle-blower.
- **Helio Gracie**, martial artist, co-founded Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu style
- **John Kluge**, philanthropist
- **Roger Milliken**, textiles magnate
- **Norman Wisdom**, comedian, "England's funniest man"





# 姊妹團契60週年感恩慶典

黃約麗傳道 • 楊江雅娟執事

感謝主耶穌，姊妹團契60週年感恩慶典蒙主賜福，能於2011年2月22日順利進行。半年前，我們邀請到洪吳純瑜師母，她答應擔任感恩會的講員，我們的心才安定下來，因為好講員不容易請得到。這兩天，天氣晴，主恩充沛，感激主愛不盡。

60週年感恩慶典的前一天，職員往機場迎接菲律賓華福婦女團契主席吳純瑜傳道。講員如期安抵本埠，由姊妹團契副主席王黃美蓮姊妹來獻花。黃陳靈玉姊妹招待住宿。從其住宅往宿務華國會議中心招待午餐。職員們和貴賓彼此交通享受主內甜蜜的團契。

2月22日下午三時，我們在宿務基督教會的大禮堂一同崇拜主耶穌。由陳蕭梅治姊妹建議團契主席、講員、顧問、職員、契友們安著排好的隊伍樂曲步進大禮堂敬拜主。楊江雅娟執事擔任主席、領唱、報告姊妹團契的簡史和活動，蔡恆美姊妹司琴，蕭必冷

傳道開會的禱告，黃約麗傳道讀經並介紹講員。經文馬太5:15-16「人點燈，不放在斗底下，是放在燈台上，就照亮一家的人。你們的光也當這樣照在人前，叫他們看見你們的好行為，便將榮耀歸給你們在天上的父。」洪吳純瑜師母的題目是「活得可愛，為主發光」。這是我們現在需要的課題，因為契友們在人生中扮演不同角色。如她是作人家的大姊或小妹、伯母、阿姨、母親、祖母、人家的老師或老朋友某角色。影響別人的生命，使人認識獨一無二的真神。自己一生走主道路，引人歸主。這種人生無價寶。講員說：家有一老，則有一寶。長輩有許多人生的知識、智慧可以做年輕人的榜樣。另一方面，我們若老，就要承認我們已老了，我們要接受裝備(學習)，保持身體健康，要盡量與朋友聯絡，財產趕緊分配。培養下一代的人認識正確的價值觀，(如：拿東西給長輩要用雙手。)好好靠主過日子，安然度日。講員勉勵在時代轉變中，我們換了角色，要接受。我





們要繼續為主發光，要活得可愛。我們要俏(姿容輕盈俊美)、要笑(喜樂)、要跳(運動)! 全場飽嚙靈筵，感謝主。

我們在盛會中承蒙主內肢體賜愛，分擔各種工作又貢獻精彩的節目，順此致謝，願主祝福他們：傅念實兄弟佈置會場(back drop)和攝影，他的公子傅雷榮兄弟也協助攝影。黃張麗英姊妹與Majestic Catering接洽並負責預備鮮花獻給講員。黃冰妙姊妹等負責膳務、訂菜、並繕寫識別證(ID)。陳仁仁傳道設計請帖。楊永興執事設計秩序單。葉真真姊妹辦理分發紀念品的名錄、掃描像片備電腦投影片(Scan Pictures for Powerpoint Presentation)。紀念品是手電筒和錢包由以下協助分發：葉如玉執事、劉吳美瓊姊妹、尤林華美姊妹。王林玉玲姊妹負責分配招待員及裝置氣球(Balloon)。教會的工友忙得忘記錄下主講人的信息，幸得楊吳淑雅師母供給一些資料。自助餐以外，梅治姊和陳王香英姊妹獻燒牛，靈玉姊、麗英姊和華美姊獻燒羊。

李麗萍姊妹用電腦印詩歌。冰妙姊妹教導姊妹團契獻唱：「恩典夠用」。雅娟姊教導讚美操(Praises Dance)。吳蔡莉莉姊妹主持聖經猜謎。田如瑛姊妹鋼琴獨奏：「救主歡喜的聲」和「主領我路這句極好」。黃根源長老獨唱“O Glorious Love”。王李佩珠姊妹教導運動舞(Line Dancing)。會眾吟姊妹團契週年歌。黃運福牧師頒獎出席優勝者，並祝禱閉會。然後攝影。

愛筵在副堂舉行，人數足足有一百五十人。根源長老領唱：「四方各樣好物」。洪英峰傳道領禱謝飯。次日，葉蔡玉琚姊妹和主講人是同學又是好友，乃負責送她到機場上飛機回岷市。

宿務基督教會的長執、牧師、傳道、姊妹團契在2010年所邀請的講員、各團契的代表，友會有生命基督教會和伯大尼堂的代表蒞臨同頌主恩和贈送賀禮。短促中草率，遺漏之外，祈與寬恕。





# CEBU GOSPEL CHURCH & ME

Richard Joseph C. Li

I have always believed that some of God's greatest gifts to mankind are those that can change its meaning or purpose in different times and on different circumstances of our lives.

I believe that our church, Cebu Gospel Church, is one of these gifts. As we celebrate our 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, allow me to share with you the many facets and changes of what Cebu Gospel Church means to me the past 31 years....

## THE PLAYGROUND

Back when I was around the age of my son Kenzie right now, almost 2 years of age, I had my first encounter with our church. At that age of course, all that I cared about was play, eat, sleep and play. Hence, I would refer CGC as the building where I can play and have lots of fun.

Once a week, I would excitedly look forward to be at the designated Nursery room where I could actually get to play during Sundays while my parents attended Sunday services.

Little did I know that there in the 'playground', the seeds of my Christian life were slowly being sowed. My nursery teachers would always find ways to insert a thing or two about God, Jesus and what it meant to be a Christian. Although I had very little understanding then, at least it was a good beginning.

## THE PLAYSCHOOL

Fast forward to a couple of years and this

playground has now morphed into a "play-school." Not the kind of play-schools that are popping up everywhere nowadays where they teach young children just about everything. For me, playschool back then meant attending regular classes on weekdays and Sunday school at our beloved CGC. I felt that my Sunday 'play-school' was very cool and special!!!


For one, I had it only once a week. Often, our teachers didn't give us a ton of homework to do at home. It was in Sunday school that I learned a thing or two about a guy called Jesus Christ and how He gave himself up to save me and my family. Even better was that after lesson time, we would always have snacks and some fun crafts to do.

Fun as it was, I also began to understand who Jesus was and learned that the playground was actually more of a school because it had important lessons to teach. Lessons that would ultimately change my life in years to come.

## THE COMPASS

Fast forward again to a couple of years and our church the "playschool" would now become my compass. Why compass? For one, it was at this time and place where I met many of the people who later became important to me. It was here that I started to get to know many of my mentors, my ninongs and ninangs, my closest friends and most important of all, my wife Kimberly.

I also considered CGC to be my compass because



for some reasons, my parents opted to enroll me at Sacred Heart School for boys then. Not that I am complaining. In fact, I am always thankful that by doing so, they exposed me to the best of both worlds. They made sure that at home, on Friday evenings and on Sundays, my siblings and I were consistently taught about Protestant faith. On the other hand, sending me to the best school in Cebu at that time enabled me to prepare well for university studies.

As Sacred Heart School for boys was run by Jesuit priests, at times, the teachings clashed especially when it came to religion. Three times a week, our religious subjects at Sacred Heart would talk about Catholic faith and teachings were good. While I understand that both Catholic and Protestant believers are called Christians, my heart belongs to Protestant faith and I am just glad that Cebu Gospel Church helped in keeping me grounded and continually reminded me of who God is and what He means to me.

On days when I was really confused, Cebu Gospel Church was the compass that led me to the right path and at the time when I needed it most.

#### THE HOME AWAY FROM HOME

College came and after a few years, my sisters and I migrated to Canada. It was during this time that I considered CGC as my home away from home. I would always look forward to returning to Cebu and to a certain degree, to going back home to CGC. Whether it was just for a few days during school term break or vacation break from work while working in Canada, I would always try to reconnect with friends that I have made at CGC.

It has never failed to amaze me how during those times, when I come back and visit CGC either for a CYF session or a practice meeting with the Soul Searchers, my fellow church-mates would always make me feel like I have never left at all. It was during times like these that I said to myself how lucky I am because not only did God give me a church that welcomes its “balikbayans” wholeheartedly but that God has also blessed me with true friends who accept me for who I am and are always looking after my own good regardless of where I have been. Somehow, it became part of the reason why I wanted to come back to Cebu for good.

#### THE CHURCH AS MY SOURCE OF STRENGTH

Fast forward to year 2009 where life changing events happened. It was then when I considered the

Church to be my source of strength. My wife just gave birth to our little bundle of joy named Kenzie. When Z was about a month old, I almost lost my life because of Dengue. When you are about my age, 28yrs old at that time, you would think that Dengue is something that is off the radar of things to worry about. Although we often hear tragic stories of children and even young adults who succumbed to this dreaded virus, it doesn't really register much until you yourself go through the ordeal.

It was during this time that I would consider myself as one of the luckiest people alive. For one, I was at the emergency room when the dengue shock syndrome happened, right in the midst of many medical consultants as well as life-saving equipment and medication. Second and more importantly, it was also during this time that I saw the outpouring support, prayers and love from the Church that has stood by me all my life. What was even more amazing was that church acquaintances and people I hardly know would visit me during my recovery to offer support and prayers for me and my family. To this very day, I still thank God for that second life and for all those who were there to help me see it through.

#### THE CHURCH AS MY SOURCE OF HOPE

Finally, fast forward to today, I am now a father of an active growing boy. The church has now become my source of hope. A hope that I will be able to plant the seeds of Christianity as my son starts his own journey and cycle of life, and as he moves forward from playground to his playschool, may he be properly rooted in the values and virtues of a wonderful Christian life.

A hope that when the time comes for him to face his own devils and trials or when he becomes confused or disoriented and gets lost in the process, our church will once again become a source of light at the end of the tunnel. That Cebu Gospel Church will once again be a compass to lead Z back to the right path at the time when he needs it the most.

A hope that God will greatly use Cebu Gospel Church in giving to Z a life story of his own and one that is hopefully bigger, brighter and more fruitful than mine so that one day, he too can tell his own child about this beautiful gift God calls Cebu Gospel Church. A church that would mean so many things under many circumstances and at different times to Z as it did over mine.

Happy 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary Cebu Gospel Church! To God be the Glory!



# 行事為人的「8」則

許郭錦繡

中國人特別喜愛「8」這數字，因為「8」是預表興旺及發達，所以在2008年的世界運動會，中國特訂於8月8日8時舉行開幕典禮。此外，中國人也喜歡汽車的號牌有「8」這號數，所以願意付出高價而獲得。甚至要購買高樓大廈，也喜愛選擇第「8」座樓，其價值雖然比較其他高一點也不介意。

聖經有記載上帝用洪水滅絕人類，他留下挪亞一家口「8」個人，耶穌在登山寶訓也以「8福」來教導人，而保羅的書信又指引行事為人的「8則」，以供信徒待人接物之準繩及處世之指南。

## (一) 行事為人是憑着信心(林後5:7)

### Live By Faith

「信心」及「眼見」是相對的生活範疇，信心是屬靈的天上生活，眼見是屬世的世界生活。所謂信心，就是「所望之事的實底，未見之事的確據」(來11:1)。聖經有記載：「人非有信就不能得上帝的喜悅」(來11:6)。

要靠信心：

• 仰望上帝 - 亞伯拉罕憑着信心離開本地本族父家往神所要指示他的地方去(創2:1)。他憑信心，竟把他晚年所生的獨生愛子以撒，獻給上帝，所以他被稱為「信心之父」。

如今，我們是否能在任何境遇裏，憑信心舉目仰望上帝？我們能否完全相信他的大能？如果我們懂得靠信心仰望上帝，就免感受了很多不必要的掛慮憂愁及煩悶。

• 捨棄自我 - 當我們接受主耶穌基督做我們的救主後，就應該把「自我」與他同釘十字架，讓神在我們心裏做主做王。保羅往大馬色去

要殺害門徒，但在途中親身遇到主後，就將「自我」完全的放棄了，盡力放膽的證明耶穌是基督。

• 得勝罪惡 - 如果我們憑着信心，就不靠自己的力量，而是靠着聖靈在我們心中所運行的力量去面對一切的罪惡和試探。約瑟雖然被賣到埃及地，但他靠着信心勝過情慾的引誘。要能夠站立得穩，就該憑信心，靠基督的力量，過着得勝罪惡的生活。

• 與主同行 - 與主同行實不簡單，又不容易。因十字架的路是窄的，經過的人是少的。唯有靠着信心與主同行，才可忍受艱難，克服問題，走上了世界崎嶇彎曲的路途。以諾與主同行，神就將他取去，他就不在世了(創5:24)。

## (二) 行事為人是憑着良心(使23:1)

### Live In Good Conscience

當上帝創造人類時，祂已把「良心」天賦放在人的深處，所以人能夠明辨是非，分別善惡，崇尚公義，譴責罪惡。然而，自從始祖亞當夏娃犯罪以後，所存的良心已敗壞了，理智也成為愚昧與虛妄。巴不得我們能省察自己，責備己錯，悔改認罪，公平待人，分辨善惡，存着一個無虧的良心與人交往。

## (三) 行事為人當順着聖靈而行(加5:16)

### Live by the Spirit

聖靈和情慾是相敵的對象，順着聖靈就不會放縱肉體的情慾，肉體的情慾包括姦淫，污穢，邪蕩，拜偶像，邪術，仇恨，爭競，忌恨，惱怒，結黨，紛爭，異端，嫉妒，醉酒，荒宴等類(加5:19-21)。一個真正屬主的人能夠靠着聖靈結出聖靈的果子：仁愛、喜樂、和平、忍耐、恩慈、良善、信

實、溫柔、節制(加5:22),活出好的見證,榮耀主名。

#### (四) 行事為人要憑著愛心(弗5:2)

##### Live a Life of Love

甚麼是愛?「愛」有許多的釋義,但是我認為最詳細完整的釋義是記載在哥林多前書13:4-8:「愛是恆久忍耐,又有恩慈,愛是不嫉妒,愛是不自誇,不張狂,不作害羞的事,不求自己的益處,不輕易發怒,不計算人的惡,不喜歡不義,只喜歡真理.凡事包容,凡事相信,凡事盼望,凡事忍耐,愛是永不止息」.「如今常存的有信,望,愛,其中最大的是愛」(林前13:13)。

神的福音是以「愛」為中心.因為「上帝愛世人,甚至將他的獨生子賜給他們,叫一切信他的,不至滅亡,反得永生」(翰3:16)。「神為我們的罪作了挽回祭,這就愛了,上帝既是這樣愛我們,我們也當彼此相愛」(約壹4:10-11)。

什麼是愛的表現?要用愛心說誠實話(弗4:15).不可有淫亂,污穢,貪婪.不說淫詞,妄語和戲笑的話,總要說感謝的話(弗5:3-4).凡事不可虧待人,要愛人如己.這樣,世人就必因我們所彰顯的愛,受了感動而接受耶穌得蒙拯救。

#### (五) 行事為人當像光明的子女(弗5:8)

##### Live a Life of Light

上帝創造宇宙,第一天就是要有光(創1:3),啟示錄最後一章也述說:「不再有黑暗,他們也不用燈光日光,因為主上帝要光照他們.他們要作王,直到永永遠遠」(啟22:5).可見「光」在神的眼中,是極其重要的。

耶穌說:「我是世界的光,跟從我的就不在黑暗裡走,必要得著生命的光」(約8:12).主說:「人若恨他的弟兄,他是在黑暗裡.愛弟兄才是在光明中」(約壹2:9-10)。

光明所結的果子就是一切良善、公義、誠實(弗5:9).我們的生活、工作、言行、舉止、心懷意念,要靠主活出「良善」.我們也要以「公義」待人,不分富貴貧賤,而是一視同仁.並要以「誠實」與人交往,不要當面甜言蜜語,背後妄加毀謗.總要「察驗何為主所喜悅的事」(弗5:10),不行暗昧無益的事,倒要將行惡可恥人的行為顯明出來.(弗5:11)

#### (六) 行事為人與基督的福音相稱(腓1:27)

##### Live a Life Worthy of the Gospel

福音的真諦乃是基督為我們的罪死了,而且埋葬了,第三天復活了(林前15:3).我們既然接受了這福音,就應該省察自己是否真的與主同釘十字架,將「老我」埋葬了,而活出新的生命.行事為人要與基督的福音相稱,必須「有同一心志,站立得穩,為所信的福音,齊心努力,凡事不怕敵人的驚嚇」(腓1:27-28)。

#### (七) 行事為人與蒙召的恩相稱(弗4:1)

##### Live a Life Worthy of the Calling

神用重價贖回了我們,使我們享受蒙召之恩.我們要如何報答此恩呢?「凡事謙虛,溫柔,忍耐,用愛心互相寬容,用和平彼此聯絡,竭力保守聖靈所賜合而為一的心」(弗4:2-3).並照基督所量給各人的恩賜,各盡其職,建立基督的身體(弗4:7,12)。

#### (八) 行事為人對得起主(西1:10a)

##### Live a Life Worthy of the Lord

耶穌有兩個門徒對不起他.一個是彼得,一個是猶大.彼得曾經對主誇口說:「眾人雖然為你的緣故跌倒,我卻永不跌倒」.耶穌說:「我實在告訴你,今夜雞叫以先,你要三次不認我」.彼得說:「我就是必須和你同死,也總不能不認你」(太26:33-35).但是,當主被捉以後,他處於生死的關頭,就三次否認主.請問,當我們有一天活在宗教受逼迫的環境中時,豈可保證我們不會像彼得跌倒而否認主?

猶大以卅兩銀出賣了主,卅兩銀是當時一個奴僕的價值(出21:32).如今我們生存在充滿邪惡和誘惑的社會中,是否為了金錢而放棄上帝離開他?為了貪愛錢財與世界妥協而出賣了祂?

要對得起主,就應該「滿心知道神的旨意,凡事蒙他喜悅,在一切善事上結果子,並漸漸多認識神」(西1:9-10)。

總之,願我們將「行事為人的8則」,不僅是永銘在心,而是實踐在每日的生活上,直到將來審判時,能坦然無懼在主前,將一切榮耀歸於上帝。

(一) 行事為人是憑著信心 - Live by Faith

(二) 行事為人是憑著良心 - Live in Good Conscience

(三) 行事為人當順著聖靈而行 - Live by the Spirit

(四) 行事為人要憑著愛心 - Live a Life of Love

(五) 行事為人當像光明的子女 - Live a Life of Light

(六) 行事為人與基督的福音相稱 - Live a Life Worthy of the Gospel

(七) 行事為人與蒙召的恩相稱 - Live a Life Worthy of the Calling

(八) 行事為人對得起主 - Live a Life Worthy of the Lord



# 凡事都有定期

為宿務基督教會九十五週年慶典而寫

邵晨光博士

「上帝造萬物，各按其時成為美好……」  
(傳三11)

欣聞宿務基督教會九十五週年立會慶典，我僅代表世界華福、菲律賓華福聯誼會和菲律賓聖經神學院，敬致賀忱！

宿務基督教會是菲華教會的一個重要的燈台，不單照亮你們所在的宿務市，也照亮菲律賓與亞洲。你們的宣教事工，不但是差錢且差人，其工作果效有百倍的收成，上帝必繼續不斷地藉著教會流露出更多的恩典，讓更多人得到福音的益處。

## 一. 慶祝有時

教會中大大小小的慶祝活動，都是榮耀並稱頌上帝的機會。當所羅門王建完聖殿，他以禱告獻上感恩(王上八2-53)，並祝福上帝的子民，也祈禱使地上的萬國都知道惟獨耶和華是上帝，並無別的上帝(王上八54-66)。

當天獻上的平安祭，有二萬二千隻牛，十二萬隻羊，是個極其盛大的聚會，眾人都目睹有雲彩充滿耶和華的殿，見證上帝的威嚴和同在(王上八10)。

慶祝有時，慶祝中的喜樂是上帝所給予的。在喜慶中，上帝子民所表現的信靠和感恩的情懷，表達出我們享受並且感謝祂所賜的恩惠，相信宿務基督教會的九十五週年慶祝，猶如舊約子民奉獻聖殿時所享受到的——上帝的悅納和同在的喜樂。

## 二. 紀念有時

教會舉辦週年慶典，除了安排慶典節目秩序和參加節目的人員以外，更重要的是紀念主在我們當中所行的神蹟奇事，也當紀念上帝如何拯救我們的前輩，設立祂的教會，使我們今天能在主的家庭裡，有事奉、敬拜祂的機會。同時，我們藉著週年的慶祝活動，一方面數算主的恩典，另一方面也激勵我們效

法前輩忠心事主，使上帝的名得到榮耀。

華人教會一般很少注意歷史，傳統上認為「左手所作的，不應讓右手知道」。舊約中的歷史書，以人名地名記載上帝如何介入歷史，被擄以後的時代，人名的記載特別的多，其用意就是見證上帝的偉大和恩典。上帝願意藉著祂所揀選的人去作成祂的工，我們每一個人都是祂手中可以完成事工的器皿；上帝也必紀念你為祂所擺上的服事。

紀念有時，在這九十五週年喜慶之際，我們一邊緬懷上帝在過去年日的恩領，一邊收集蒙恩的證據，籌備五年以後的百年大慶。比如：尋找舊照片，訪問一些見證人，記錄一些榮神益人的生活見證。主僕人忠心的教導，長執恆心的事奉，信徒愛心的奉獻，這一些都將激勵我們愛主更深，事主更得力。

感謝主，你們的差傳事工，不但在金錢上支持菲律賓聖經神學院，而且輸送優秀人才裝備教牧同工。曾經在菲聖受神學造就並服事過菲聖的有陳惠美傳道、黃約麗傳道、蕭信心博士、陳惠璇傳道、傅念玉博士、陳秋瑩博士等。目前陳惠璇傳道、蕭信心博士、陳秋瑩博士仍然效力菲聖，她們是菲聖的得力師資。當我們開始拓展海外神學教育事工時，你們又熱烈回應關懷，十年後的今天，撒下的種子已經有了百倍的收成。

上帝有一本紀念冊，紀念那些敬畏祂、思念祂名字的人(瑪三16)。我們相信在那一本冊子裡面，肯定有很多宿務基督教會弟兄姊妹

的名字，我們當喜樂紀念他們的辛勞和付代價的服事。

### 三. 推動有時

上帝很祝福祂的教會，宿務基督教會是其中蒙福的教會。我們在週年慶祝時，除了紀念往事，思念前輩的成就，更應該反省檢討事工的得與失，而能進一步計劃、推動主託付給教會的宣教大使命。

推動有時，我們要勇於面對時代的挑戰，積極努力策劃新的事工，迎合時代的需要，因為上帝還有很多藉教會去推動的事工。反觀自己，你是否還有可以為主擺上的計劃？教會是否有些地方還需要改進？我們面對第二代、第三代多元文化不同群體的需要，你是否能為興旺主的福音，樂意參與教會事工的推動，成為上帝恩典出口的管導？

### 結語

教會週年是個喜樂的日子，我們應該感恩慶祝、紀念和推動。但願上帝繼續在教會中掌權，得榮耀！但願教會的眾同工、長執、會友更體貼主的心意，與教牧同心合意，推動且完成主聖工的託付。阿們！


邵晨光

菲律賓聖經神學院院長

亞洲神學協會總幹事

世界華福董事

主曆二零一一年三月一日



# 耶穌是羊的門

白鴿

聖經：「我就是門，凡從我進來的，必然得救，並且出入得草吃。」(約十：9)。

「門」是每家每戶的人家不可缺少的工具。但門具有能開，能關的關鍵。在屬靈的準則；「開」是容許那些饑渴義的人進去。大衛曾說：「這是耶和華的門，義人要進去。」(詩一一八：20)。「關」，就是那些不體貼神的旨意，祇憑行善、世俗潮流，且以乖戾的行為，在神的教會中行事。主耶穌曾做戒說：「你們這些假冒偽善的文士和法利賽人有禍了！因為你們正當人前，把天國的門關了，自己不進去，正要進去的人，你也不容他們進去。」(太廿三：13)。

神對先知以西結說：「人子啊，你要向以色列的牧人發預言，攻擊他們說：主耶和華如此說：禍哉！以色列的牧人只牧養自己。牧人並不當牧養群羊嗎？你們吃脂油，穿羊毛，宰肥壯的，卻不牧養群羊。」(西三四：1-3)。

這雖然是神對當時以色列人的說的。照樣也是對古今往來，世界各國的領導人說的。

主耶穌宣告說：「我就是門」，這是一個多麼奇妙的應許；祂的應許，凡一切相信祂、跟隨祂的人，歸入祂的家中，成為祂的保護看顧的對象。原來在巴勒斯坦地區的羊圈，圍欄只有一個缺口，並沒有真正的一扇門。每到晚上，牧人橫躺在羊圈入口的正中，自己成為那扇「門」。耶穌正是那扇門。因主耶穌宣告說：「我是道路、真理、生命；若不藉著我，沒有人能到父

那裡去。」(約十四：6)。凡進入主耶穌的門，便能享受以下四個的福：

- 一、救恩之福：因為主耶穌是唯一的救恩之門，除祂以外別無拯救。凡相信進入耶穌之門的人，必然得救，並且得著豐盛的生命。也必蒙完全的救贖，脫離罪。
- 二、自由之福：凡進入主耶穌的門，便得著釋放，享受靈裡的自由。並可以「出」或「入」。所以，進入耶穌的門，可以享受真正的自由。且能得到休憩安息，出能得保護、看顧；入能與神親密交通。
- 三、豐盛之福：進入主耶穌的門，就能得到無限的供應。享受祂所有擁有一切的豐富。主耶穌不但要你進入祂的門內。同樣的，祂也進入你的門內。這就是合一的生命。
- 四、生命之福：主耶穌說：「我是.....生命。」主耶穌是一切生命的源頭，人的生命氣息都在乎祂是生命的主宰，也是賜人生命的主；祂是復活的主，更是叫人復活的主；祂是永生的主，更能藉著祂得到永生。所以離了主耶穌，就沒有真生命，而且我們的生命便失去意義和目的。主耶穌所賜的生命，是豐盛的生命。





# 青人天頌

小星光


如果有架民航機，騰空飛翔，伏視地面上的東西，會感到渺茫或自為很豪放，然而世界上的事物都有它本身的限制。飛機最畏怕的，該是暴風雨及惡劣氣候。在這種情況下，就是霸王機也會變得很脆弱。大小的飛機得聽從民航處被鎖定在倉庫中避難。搭客連一個也不得離開機場，要在機場過夜，但可以在機場享受免費便餐，聽音樂及新聞，或聊天打發時間。這群搭客中有兩位是來自堪里刺，一個是姓陳的老華僑，另一個是菲律賓少女叫君尼，受僱去新佳埠工作。由於他倆同時來自菲島，言語很通順。陳華僑先搭訕，說君尼幾年後發大財。這話使君尼聽得捧腹大笑。她答說，我家道四壁，沒有業產或地產，家中只有一個幼弟和父母耕田過生活，沒有養餵牛馬羊群或雞鴨待售，不賭博，又不買馬票或六合彩，你說我幾年後發大財，倒不如說我會做白夢吧，她的話說得陳華僑面紅耳赤。當氣候轉晴，民航機都略續飛回新佳埠，搭客也安全被送回歸途，包括君尼和陳華僑。君尼被她的女醫生主人安置在醫生老媽的家中侍候老人家及當雜差。她工作非常殷勤，認真和丹心。她聰明伶俐，也善解人意。她和老人家和睦相處，很討家人的歡心。大有自己像老人家的親孫兒，受盡她的痛惜與喜歡，這一切都反映在醫生的眼眶中。逝水如年，光陰荏苒，一晃眼已過了五、六年。老人家雖有良藥保身，名醫生女兒與工人的護理，然而還打不過病魔的吞噬。老人家心中雖然有女兒細心治療，君尼忠心陪伴湯水食物的侍候，世界值得留戀與可愛。可是在訣別的時刻，一切都變為無能為力，老人家有氣無力張開她的眼簾，不願或不敢閉著眼睛。下意識，怕合了眼眶，不能再看見她最痛愛的人物與親人。她脫下幾十年隨身陪戴的玉戒放在君尼手中再合著，意思是叫她收下。然後閉上無力再支持的眼眶，夾著兩滴熱淚。四圍的人都嚎啕大哭，特別是君尼

哭得最憂傷，最痛苦。醫生沒法救治她的母親，雖然很哀痛，但卻忍痛折哀為老人家辦理後事，也將君尼遷入房間一同住。

光陰疾馳，逝水不留人，老人家過往十幾年如一日，醫生的健康漸漸虛弱，雖然每日問診的病人沒有減少，但她身體有支持不住的感覺，有時行路得借助君尼的扶助。

一天適逢是假日，她叫君尼到醫室談話，手中拿著一個公文包。君尼見狀，以為是她工作的末日，誤為醫生要辭退她，忙跪下求情說：媽！請留下我，現我還能夠工作和侍候你！醫生說：你先讀完手中的文件再說。讀後，君尼說：媽！你為什麼待我這麼好？我不配！醫生慈祥地說：我和母親很久以前想收留你作乾女兒，因為我們很賞識你的殷勤工作，認真負責任，能幹又忠心，你配得承受我在新佳埠的美金四十萬元存款和半座洋樓。在我走了以後，你可帶你的幼弟來新佳埠工讀，以謀出身。你的服務夠丹心，夠盡職，我們母女都非常滿意。這一點的錢財，是我們一點心意和對你十幾年的補賞。這份文件你一旦簽號交入銀行，你便自動成為賬戶的新主人，其他手續靈律師會替你辦理完善。

世間的人多數是詭詐多端。忠心樸實的人應該是微乎其微。君尼不過是農村山頂姑娘，沒有享受高深教育或技術的訓練，工作開始，是到新佳埠當個雜差。她只是單純鄉下女，被安排為醫生及醫生母親作侍候。她本能將家事辦理得井然有序，她洞悉老人家的意見，好容易取得老人家的歡心及相處。醫生甚至取信地將半座洋樓送她，及將銀行美金四十萬存款作她的名存入戶口，這可能是罕發生趣事，也是個忠心侍候人的佳事與報應。如果我們將忠心事人的精神，更改中心事奉神，做光與做鹽，拯救人的靈魂，定蒙神更加厚待。神的祝福是人意想不到的加倍。



## CEBU GOSPEL CHURCH AT 95 YEARS OLD (YOUNG!?)

Lili Gothong

Deuteronomy 7:9, "Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; He is the faithful God keeping His covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commands!!!"

To be ninety-five years old.....If it were a building, it would need renovation. If it were a car, it is called a vintage. If it were porcelain or an art piece, then we call it an antique. For a Christian, he should have loved God all the more and kept His command as he experienced God's spiritual rewards for love, obedience, and faithfulness.


When the church council, during its February 2011 council meeting, decided to celebrate our church's 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a core group composed of five deacons and deaconesses was formed to plan out the event. I was privileged to be one of the five and everyone readily accepted the assignment.

After a week, no one called for a meeting. I prayed, and realized that I am the oldest in years (but definitely not in looks). So I texted the other four members and suggested that we need more brethren to brainstorm such an important task. We added three young men and five not-so-young people, all of whom have big desires to serve. With "Glorifying God" as our focus, everyone was given specific job according to their God given gifts. Nobody wanted to take the lead so I took on the task of being the coordinator, and reminded them

to give their agenda to me. And this is what I have observed:

Each one was assigned a specific work to do, but to my amazement, some can efficiently multi-task. One was in-charge of praying not only for members of the core group, but all the fellowships as well. The latter were requested to focus their whole month's program towards our theme, and most important of all, to incorporate this church event in their daily prayers. We all know that "Prayer" is our best tool/weapon as we petition our needs to our heavenly Father. Celebration was set on March 12-13, 2011. As we were planning, everything seemed working as planned. With the unanimous support of our elders, council members and of course church members, everything went on smoothly. From our spiritual to physical needs, the choices of the venue, food, décor, sound, video, souvenir, raffles, registrations, photographers, transportations, invitations, documentations, welcome and send off party, thank you cards, ushers, program and emcees. All these were carefully carried out. Many thanks to everyone who worked so hard for this event.

2:30 P.M., Friday, March 11, 2011: While I was attending a class, my sister gave me a call to report that Japan was hit by an earthquake with a Richter scale of 8.9. Right away, I reported this to



my teacher in the middle of the class. My teacher then asked, "Do you think the coming of the Lord is near?" I answered, "Yes," but in my mind I was more worried about our celebration for the next two days. I asked myself, "Will the celebration push through?" I then prayed, "Lord, please help us!!! You have blessed our Church for 95 years. What is two more days to You?" Thinking that some flights may be cancelled, my faith started to falter. Then I remembered Psalm 121, "Where does my help comes from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth..."

Who are we glorifying? Our ancestors? Our church? If the answer is "GOD", then why worry? He is in command, He is the creator of all, He shall preserve us from this time forth and forevermore. I was ashamed of myself and told myself, "You of little faith, why are you shaken by a quake?"

The day came when we had to meet our out-of-town guests! Someone was tasked to meet Professor Shang Quan, the violinist on Friday March 11, 2011. On Saturday, it was my turn to fetch Rev. & Mrs. Isidro Co at 7:00A.M. Another person was assigned to meet Rev. Philip Ong at 8:15A.M and Rev. & Mrs. Philip Co at 8:45A.M. By 7:00 A.M., no plane has arrived from Tacloban due to heavy rain and strong wind. When I inquired the information clerk, he told me that it will be delayed but no specific time was given. So we waited until 8:00 A.M.

Lo and behold! The PA system announced the arrival of the flight from Tacloban. As luggage was being claimed, the plane of Rev. Ong also landed. Is this part of God's plan? We had breakfast together and after 15 minutes, Rev. & Mrs. Co together with Pastor and Mrs. Eric Chan joined us. Everybody enjoyed the hearty breakfast as well as the fellowship.

The night till dawn: After witnessing the presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst, we can see that everybody enjoyed the night. The melody played by the violinist was superb! The Joybells and Soul Seachers presented their beautiful song numbers, and our PCGS's Marionette was just

terrific. It might not be an evangelical service, but the message they were expressing was all about the freedom we have through the love of Jesus Christ. We are no longer enslaved to Satan but we are saved & made free by Jesus' love.

That night, every member of CGC was a host and not a guest. Furthermore, we were all part of one big, big family. Although we tried our best, there were minor details that were overlooked, e.g., forgetting that we have members with the same first names, middle initials, & family names. Our Lord was testing our intelligence and generosity. Since such name was drawn during the raffles, it was decided to let both of them have the same prize.

Although we started promptly as planned, dinner was served 10 minutes late and caused some children and senior members to be a little hungry. Our apologies!! Everything else was timed perfectly. Our program ended at 9:35PM on my watch.

When I reached home, I couldn't stop praising and thanking our Lord for His blessing, wisdom & provision. Even the families of the committee members were helping out in the food area, at the registrations and in ushering. Indeed, this is what we call a Christian Family.

Sunday morning: It was showering when I woke up at around 4:30A.M. Again, whom do we call??!! Our Lord again. He is always ready to listen to our calls. The rest of the day was just great. To God be the glory for great is His faithfulness!

Monday: It was raining cats and dogs and I said to myself, "Wow!!! What perfect timing the whole celebration was!" God knows what we need!!!

The Holy Spirit convicted me to testify on what happened and what He has done for Cebu Gospel Church during her 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He is indeed our **Faithful God** and it is His faithfulness that sustains our beloved Cebu Gospel Church. Therefore, with **grateful hearts** and as Christ's one big family, let us pray that all these blessings may last a thousand generations!!!!



# 屬靈的領袖

小山

## 一. 敬畏上帝認識上帝

在2008年，職業高爾夫球家(Golfer) Pdraig Harrington得到英國公開賽和PGA的冠軍。記者問他甚麼推動力使他得勝呢？他回答道，“怕失敗是他的推動力。”對Harrington來說，怕失敗使他殷勤練習，常常到體育館去作健身運動。

箴言9：10說「敬畏耶和華是智慧的開端，認識至聖者便是聰明。」敬畏是一切屬靈智識和智慧的根基，是可敬可畏應尊重頌讚順服的。敬畏上帝使基督徒順服上帝的旨意，遠離惡事，行為正直，在世日子增多，可見敬畏上帝使我們屬靈的智慧增長。


認識至聖者就是認識上帝。怎樣認識上帝呢？就是天天讀經祈禱和上帝有密切的關係。養成好的靈修習慣。要養成這習慣，最好是在清早起床後，世事還沒有開始；如電話，家務，職業，生理等的工作還沒有開始的時候。不要為自己訂了很高的目標如半點鐘或一小時，應由小而大，如五分鐘、十分鐘漸漸增長。持之有恆必會成功。讀經使我

們認識上帝，祈禱使我們和祂有交通，吟詩讚美上帝結嘴唇的果子。

## 二. 愛主愛人

Carl J Printes作瑞典駐加拿大大使多年，在他99歲的生日，被請到電視台受訪問。有人問他長壽且活出有用生命的祕訣。他回答道：「我凡事都有節制，只有一個例外，就是照聖經說要愛上帝咱獨一的真神，而且要愛人如己，可以過度沒有限制。」他是一位愛主愛人的長者。

馬太福音22:35-40說，「內中有一個人是律法師，要試探耶穌，就問他說，夫子，律法上的誡命，那一樣是最大的呢？耶穌對他說，你要盡心，盡性，盡意，愛主你的上帝。這是誡命中的第一，且是最大的。其次也相仿，就是要愛人如己。這兩條誡命，是律法和先知一切道理的總綱。」基督徒愛主要將一切，無論是才幹，金錢，時間都獻上。羅12:1說，「所以弟兄們，我以上帝的慈悲勸你們，將身體獻上，當作活祭，是聖潔的，是上帝



所喜悅的。你們如此事奉，乃是理所當然的。」其次是愛人如己。以色列人的律法共613條，248條是正面，365條是負面的。又分為主要的和次要的。因此我們愛主要超過愛自己。愛人要好像愛自己。

### 三. 講道，聽道，行道

雅各書1:22說，「只是你們要行道，不要單單聽道，自己欺哄自己。」簡單的說就是聽道而不行道就是欺騙自己。

馬太福音23:1-3說，「那時，耶穌對眾人和門徒講論說，文士和法利賽人，坐在摩西的位上。凡他們所吩咐你們的，你們都要謹守，遵行。但不要效法他們的行為。」

有一位傳道者名Stephen Grellet。有一次他心中有很大的負擔。同時，聖靈也帶領他要到一個採木公司的工場傳福音。到了工場才發現工場沒有一個人。可是聖靈感動他必要講道。他在工場的餐廳講道。他心中感覺只有房屋牆壁的回音和四圍高樹的聳動。

幾年後，在一個幽暗的晚上，他慢慢地行到倫敦橋要過橋；突然被一個人攔阻說，「我多年在找你，現在找到了。」Grellet說，「可能你找錯了人。」那人說，「不！那天我回到工場去拿一個木鋸，因為我們忘記帶去。我聽到有人的聲音，我從木材堆看到你站著講道。聽後我認罪悔改接受主耶穌做我的救主。以後我帶領多人來信耶穌，進入天國。」

Grellet忠心講道實在是一位忠心的傳道人，而那人聽道行道是一位聽道行道的好榜樣。

### 四. 作主的僕人

在馬太福音20:25-28說，「耶穌叫了他們來說，你們知道外邦人有君王為主治理他們，有大臣操權管束他們。只是在你們中間不可這樣。你們中間誰願為大，就必作你們的用人。誰願為首的，就必作你們的僕人。正如人子來不是要受人的服事，乃是要服事人；並且要捨命作多人的贖價。」這就是信主的領袖和世界領袖的分別。

約翰三書有二個作主僕人的模範，就是：

1. 該猶按著真理來行。他接待作客旅的弟兄。特別是初期教會巡迴的傳道。還有
2. 低米丟行善有眾人給他作見證。又有真理作他的見證，使徒約翰和他的同工也作他的見證。

另外一個是在教會好為首的丟特腓，不接待使徒約翰和同工。有人要接待就把他開除趕出去，是教會的獨裁者，是屬靈領袖的警誡。

Polycarp是士每拿教會的主教。86歲的時被羅馬的巡撫捉拿，要掛在木柱用火燒死。但只要Polycarp否認主耶穌，就要放他走。Polycarp對巡撫說，「這86年來，祂未曾傷害我，惡待我，祂是我的救主，我的王。」就從容殉道。Polycarp是主忠心良善的僕人。

在教會慶祝95週年慶典的時候，我們大家來切實彼此相愛，互相勉勵大家敬畏上帝認識上帝。愛主愛人，講道聽道行道作主忠心良善的僕人！



# JESUS: THE FOUNDER AND LEADER OF THE CHURCH

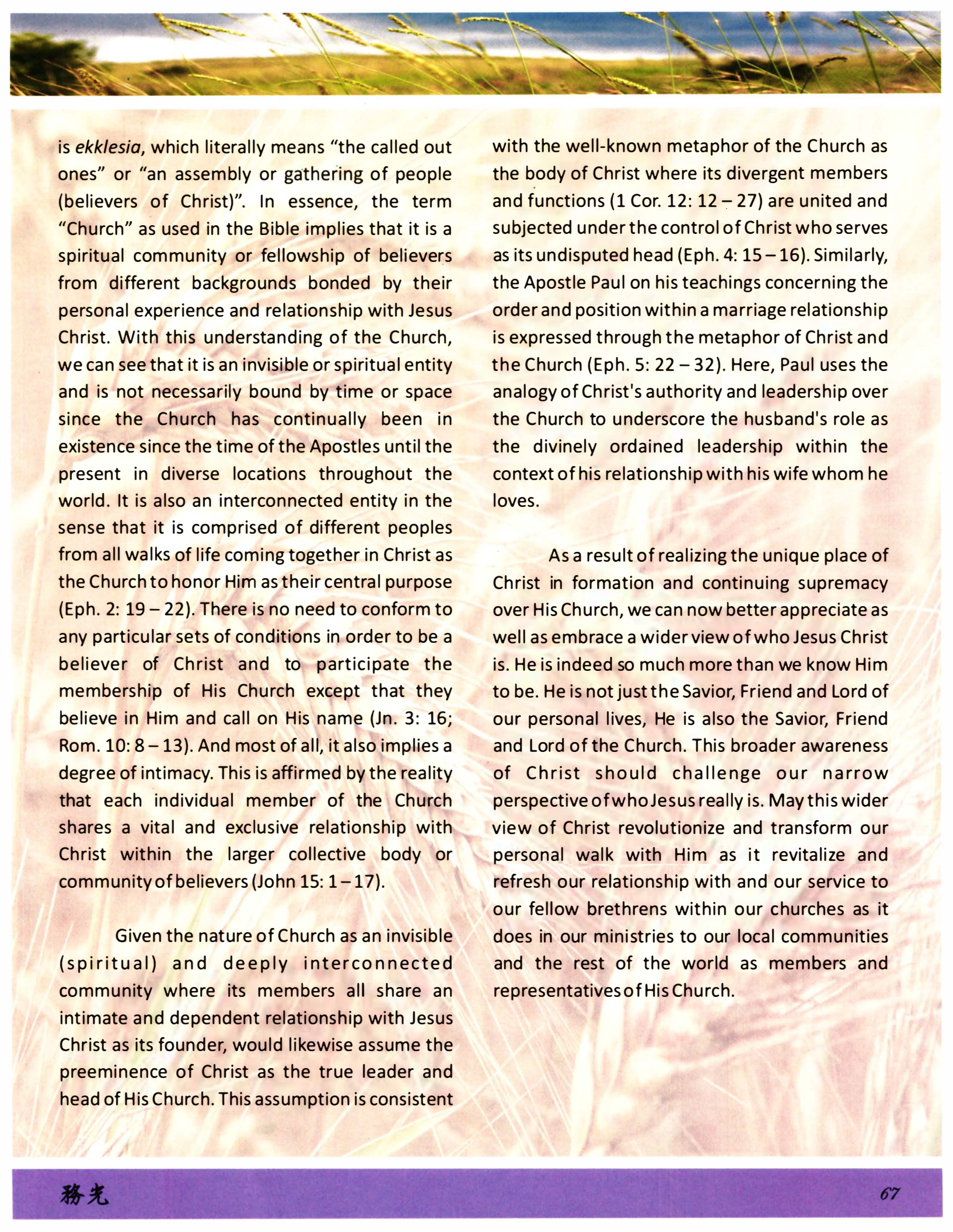
Rev. Stewart A. Young

Perhaps to Jennifer, Rory and Phoebe, their father Bill is just an ordinary loving dad. But for us and for the rest of the world, their dad Bill Gates is one of the richest people in the world and the legendary co-founder of Microsoft Corporation. In a similar way, whenever we as Christians think of our Lord Jesus Christ, the chances are we would think of Him in personal and intimate terms. For instance, we often see Christ as our Savior, our Lord, our Friend, our Helper and so forth. In one sense it is true that Christ is all these because He loves us and is very close to us. Yet, in another sense, Christ is much more than that. Among the numerous things that Jesus is includes the fact that He is also the founder and the leader of the Church. Our same Lord whom we share a special relationship is also involved in something much larger which involves the entirety of Christendom since its beginning more than two millennium ago.

The first mention of the word “church” occurred in Matthew 16: 18 when Jesus said, “---

*upon this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”* Although this passage of Scripture has been the subject to much debate between the Protestants and the Roman Catholics regarding whom the “rock” Jesus was referring to - whether it is Peter or Christ himself. In short, the more biblical view affirms that Jesus Christ IS indeed “the solid Rock” in which Peter had placed his trust on as well as the foundation in which the Church is to be built on. This interpretation is crucial since no imperfect mortal can ever logically be qualified as the founder of a divine and spiritual institution. Moreover, this understanding is more consistent with other scriptures that also indicated that Jesus is the source and the cornerstone of the Church (Ps. 118: 22; Matt. 21: 42; Eph. 2: 20 - 22).

So, if Jesus is the founder and cornerstone of the Church, what then is the Church that he founded? It is interesting to note that the term translated “Church” as used in the original Greek



is *ekklesia*, which literally means “the called out ones” or “an assembly or gathering of people (believers of Christ)”. In essence, the term “Church” as used in the Bible implies that it is a spiritual community or fellowship of believers from different backgrounds bonded by their personal experience and relationship with Jesus Christ. With this understanding of the Church, we can see that it is an invisible or spiritual entity and is not necessarily bound by time or space since the Church has continually been in existence since the time of the Apostles until the present in diverse locations throughout the world. It is also an interconnected entity in the sense that it is comprised of different peoples from all walks of life coming together in Christ as the Church to honor Him as their central purpose (Eph. 2: 19 – 22). There is no need to conform to any particular sets of conditions in order to be a believer of Christ and to participate the membership of His Church except that they believe in Him and call on His name (Jn. 3: 16; Rom. 10: 8 – 13). And most of all, it also implies a degree of intimacy. This is affirmed by the reality that each individual member of the Church shares a vital and exclusive relationship with Christ within the larger collective body or community of believers (John 15: 1 – 17).

Given the nature of Church as an invisible (spiritual) and deeply interconnected community where its members all share an intimate and dependent relationship with Jesus Christ as its founder, would likewise assume the preeminence of Christ as the true leader and head of His Church. This assumption is consistent

with the well-known metaphor of the Church as the body of Christ where its divergent members and functions (1 Cor. 12: 12 – 27) are united and subjected under the control of Christ who serves as its undisputed head (Eph. 4: 15 – 16). Similarly, the Apostle Paul on his teachings concerning the order and position within a marriage relationship is expressed through the metaphor of Christ and the Church (Eph. 5: 22 – 32). Here, Paul uses the analogy of Christ's authority and leadership over the Church to underscore the husband's role as the divinely ordained leadership within the context of his relationship with his wife whom he loves.

As a result of realizing the unique place of Christ in formation and continuing supremacy over His Church, we can now better appreciate as well as embrace a wider view of who Jesus Christ is. He is indeed so much more than we know Him to be. He is not just the Savior, Friend and Lord of our personal lives, He is also the Savior, Friend and Lord of the Church. This broader awareness of Christ should challenge our narrow perspective of who Jesus really is. May this wider view of Christ revolutionize and transform our personal walk with Him as it revitalize and refresh our relationship with and our service to our fellow brethren within our churches as it does in our ministries to our local communities and the rest of the world as members and representatives of His Church.



# THE GRACIOUS HAND OF GOD

Ann Marie Su

Last month, I had a blessed opportunity to visit Puerto Princesa, Palawan – the cleanest and greenest city in the Philippines. The purpose of the trip was two-fold: one is to see the beautiful wonders God has made in that place; and two, to visit the Batak (Aeta descendants) Tribe ministry of a pastor friend in the mountains of Palawan.

I was a bit reluctant because that would be my first trip since I got sick last 2008. Nevertheless, I prayed that the Lord would help and sustain me throughout the travel which included a 24-crossing river up a 12 km alternate walk through water and land.

Our flight was 11am on a Sunday. I thought it was still going to be at 11:40, so I decided to hold my Sunday School class as usual. Later did I realize that we had to rush to the airport because we were already late. But I prayed and the Lord helped us reach the airport just in time to be the last to check in. Whew! That was close, yet, He proved His sovereignty. This was the 1<sup>st</sup> evidence of His hand upon me.

Upon arriving Puerto, we headed for the hotel. There was a problem since we were already scheduled for our city tour but we didn't have our lunch yet. Again, I prayed that the van would not arrive yet. True enough, we were told to take our time since the other people in the group were not ready yet. After taking our last bite, the phone rang and they were outside waiting. That was the 2<sup>nd</sup> evidence.



We had a relaxing afternoon, especially since it was not hot (good for me since I have to avoid sunlight) as we travelled around the city. I felt so favored - 3<sup>rd</sup> evidence.



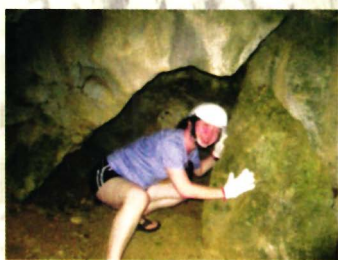
The following day was the Underground River Tour. From our 8am schedule, we were told to be ready by 6am – we did not like the idea but had no choice. We took a quick breakfast and on we went. It was a long drive then the ferry ride and there we were – looking at the magnificent river cave with all the fascinating objects formed by the stalactites and stalagmites over the years. God is awesomely amazing! On our way back, I made sure to take in a hearty fill of fresh air. I saw a big crowd at the port who unfortunately could not cross the waters anymore because the wind was getting stronger and became too risky for the trip. That was why we had to make our tour earlier as planned. God knew it and arranged it all for us. That was the 4<sup>th</sup> evidence.

And since we were early, the tour guide suggested we go up and see the Ugong Cave which was a 25-minute 75 m climb up through rocks, steep ladders and ropes. We had to be geared with a hard hat and gloves. It was a hard climb and I was sweating so much – I almost lost my breath inside. But I guess the sea breeze I took in earlier during the ferry ride helped a lot – 5<sup>th</sup> evidence.

When we reached the top, the view was beautiful. But there was a catch! We could go back down the same way we went up or ride the zipline – a 75m drop then 350m slide



to the ground. Having no choice and being my first, I took the challenge and my heart almost came out. But I survived – 6<sup>th</sup> evidence.



The third day was Honda Bay (island hopping) Tour. We went to three different fine white sand beaches. It was a very hot day so I had to wear long sleeves and

carry an umbrella – making me look like a fool, but then it's better to obey than be sorry. When we were in Snake Island, I wanted to go to the restroom after eating but was told it was about 300m walk under the sun. I decided to wait till the next island since there were better facilities. Finally, we had to go. Our boat was parked so far – seemed like miles away. But upon reaching it, lo and behold, the restroom was right in front of us. Wow, isn't the Lord good? He saved me from walking earlier knowing that I will still be going

there soon – the 7<sup>th</sup> evidence.



The Dos Palmas Tour was our last. But as promised, I went to visit the Batak Tribe instead. Going there was indeed a blessed experience. It made me realize that I am far more blessed than many people – I do not have plenty but I am not in want. I left the hotel at about 5:30 am and reached Caramay at past 8. By 9am, we were on our way sooner as I expected, and had to cross the first river then on we went till we arrived at the Batak community.



Prior to our trip, I asked the Lord for fine weather, meaning to say, neither sunny nor rainy. And that is exactly what He gave. During the whole travel, the clouds were floating in the sky. Once we arrived, the sun came out. That's the 8<sup>th</sup> evidence.

*their chieftain*

It was a very pleasant trip despite getting wet every

now and then, balancing among the rocks, resisting the current and finding the perfect spot to cross over the waters. I did not have to walk much since the Lord graciously provided a motorcycle for me to ride on while the others walked behind - 9<sup>th</sup> evidence.

Upon arrival, there was not much to expect. There were a few wooden structures which were basically empty. It was practically quiet since there is no electricity in that place. Later did I understand why I was requested to bring an Inverter (something that could convert 12v power to 220v electricity). Finally, we heard music from the open basketball area as the children came out to play. I noticed most of them were thin and undernourished since the land cannot produce much because of the clay soil and they usually feed on canned goods and dried fish. As I observed their meager lifestyle, I felt so blessed – 10<sup>th</sup> evidence.



*their church*



*their school*



*their house*

I was so touched to know that majority of the community have come to the saving knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Thank God for the unwavering faithfulness and passion of the pastor couple who have unselfishly and lovingly served in that community for the past twelve years – despite having five bouts with malaria. At just the right time, I went on a Wednesday and was able to witness their prayer meeting. Many came and the big group was later divided into 4 groups – fathers, mothers, teens and children – handled by the pastor couple and two other volunteers. It was indeed so encouraging! This is the 11<sup>th</sup> evidence.



Everyone had to retire early since there was not much to do – no electricity, remember? As I lay on the bamboo bed, I could not see anything. It was pitch black. My mind kept imagining what if there was a wild animal or a bad person coming.... Finally I dozed off. I woke up to the sound of rain. I was beginning to worry about our return trip scheduled at 5:30am so we could catch the van to the city by 7am. I wondered how we could cross the rivers when it was still dark. We decided to leave at 6am. Perfect timing because by then, the rain stopped and the sun shone – 12<sup>th</sup> evidence – the Lord knows best.

We hurried and got down in time. I arrived in the city at about 9am, had breakfast and headed back to the hotel to pack up for the trip back to Cebu.

As I look back, I could only give thanks and praise to our God for His loving kindness and indeed, I could say over and over again ( as did Nehemiah in Neh. 2:8 ) that..... **THE GRACIOUS HAND OF GOD WAS UPON ME.**





# 根深葉茂頌主恩

商泉

有感菲律賓宿務基督教會95周年庆典

三月的菲律賓，依然是春光明媚的艳阳天，我从南半球的澳洲，跨越赤道，再次来到美丽的宿務，参与宿務基督教會于3月12日举办的建會95周年感恩庆典。感谢主的保守，我于3月11日中午顺利到达宿務国际机场，牧师会同James弟兄和他的母亲在机场热情迎接我，并精心为我安排好食宿。就在当天，刚刚传来日本强烈地震的新闻并没有分散我为庆典悉心准备分享和演奏的心志，反而更深信只有神的大爱和大能方能拯救这个混乱的世界。晚上睡前躺在床上，静静思索将用英文分享见证的内容和用琴弦分享的旋律，在与主的祷告对话中进入梦乡。

第二天3月12日是个重要的日子，下午坐着James弟兄的车前往庆典会场Grand Convention Centre，看着周围熟悉的街景和质朴的人群不断涌入眼帘，很快地就到达了会场。就在偌大的主会场内，精美而巨大的晚会主题镶嵌在舞台背景上，发出感恩的光芒，同时看到很多弟兄姊妹还在默默地为大会会场做准备，特别看到堆积如山的奖品，深感大家为主摆上的衷心。

晚上7点半，庆典晚会正式开始，而我的分享和演奏分为上下两个部分。当我在主持人介绍之后走向舞台中央之时，《唱哈利路亚赞美主》的

伴奏音乐响起，我内心顿时升起对万能真神仰慕的感动——是祂的手在95年前在这里种下福音的种子，建立起这座传扬祂大能与大爱的殿堂，造就了一代又一代的牧人，拯救了一批又一批的灵魂，结出了一茬又一茬的硕果。。。。如今，这颗福音的大树正值根深叶茂之际，在见证了将近一个世纪的风风雨雨之后，将会结出更丰盛的果子来。“让赞美的音符响起”，“用丝弦乐器赞美祂”，这就是我要向祂献上的感恩，是祂用那奇妙的恩典使我从软弱变为坚强，从贫穷变为富足，并在我身上成就祂的计划，成为祂手中的器皿。在《献上感恩》的终曲中，我再次感受到祂大爱的浇灌，用最响亮的G大调和弦结束了分享与演奏，而我内心却深知感恩的心是不会终止和枯竭的，因祇只有懂得感恩才会有真正的喜乐人生。

庆典晚会在感恩与喜乐的气氛中圆满结束。再次仰望那舞台中央晚会主题的大字，格外醒目的这是那两个字“感恩”。衷心祝愿神继续保守和复兴宿務基督教會，让我们怀着信心与盼望，迎接她100周年的更大庆典——恩典！！

商泉 2011年3月28日 写于澳洲布里斯本





宿務基督教會  
CEBU GOSPEL CHURCH

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