

FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

(A ministry of Calvary Tengah Bible-Presbyterian Church to NUS, NTU, NIE & Polytechnics)

NEWSLETTER VOL 3/2004 (July-Sept)

Revival!

by Clement

Read Nehemiah 8

Revival! That is a keyword that is frequently being echoed around Christendom today. In the name of “revival”, numerous revival crusades and gospel gatherings have been organised by churches and Christian organisations around the world, some even boasting of filling entire stadiums, and garnering thousands of conversions overnight. Even the local Bible-Presbyterian scene is calling for revival, with various camps discussing revival in the church. Some claim that Christianity today is undergoing a major revival. Is this true?



In this short article, we shall examine what are the **characteristics of true revival** from Nehemiah chapter 8. It all started during the twentieth year of the Persian rule of King Artaxerxes, who had reigned over the exiled Jews. Nehemiah was initially the appointed cupbearer for the king. Upon hearing of the state of the walls of Jerusalem, Nehemiah could not help but feel greatly burdened for the city. After obtaining permission from the king to return to Jerusalem, Nehemiah gathered some of the exiled Jews to restore the walls of Jerusalem. The people faced fierce opposition, ranging from mockery, to armed raids and blackmail. However, armed with nothing more than faith in their God to prosper them, the

returnees arose and built (Nehemiah 2:20), sometimes with one hand working, and the other hand holding a weapon (Nehemiah 4:17). Because of their trust in God and their determination to complete the project, the walls of Jerusalem were restored in an amazingly short period of 52 days! All praise be unto God! It is now the first day of the seventh month in 444B.C, which is the time for the Feast of Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24). A great revival is waiting to happen!

Let us now make some observations of this great revival.

(1) Firstly, there was a **burning desire for the Word of God**.

Notice in verse 1 that it is the people themselves, and not any other leader, who took initiative to ask for the book of the law. More importantly, they did it as **“one man”** (v.1). What a show of unity! When the law of God was read to them, both the men and women, and all those who could understand, paid full attention



to what was being said from morning till midday (v.3). Such a congregation would be any faithful pastor's dream. This was a people who were on fire for God's Word! There were no complaints about lengthy sermons or Bible Study Sessions! Rather, they were filled with great joy when **"they had understood the words that were declared unto them"** (v.12). They were like newborn babes, desiring the sincere milk of the Word, so that they may grow thereby (2 Peter 2:2). Beloved reader, is that also your desire?

One very good indication of a person's spiritual state is His love for God's Word. David in Psalm 19:10 describes His desire for the Word of God to be more than much fine gold. To Him, the Word of God is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. On the contrary, a person who is rebellious despises the truth (Isaiah 30:9-10). This rather hear smooth things than the truth (Isaiah 30:9-10). This was the situation during Jeremiah's ministry. The deceits about **"peace, peace"** (Jeremiah 6:14; preached the judgements of chose not to repent. Instead they took God's ordained dungeon where there was it took a Gentile, Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, to take pity on him and save him out of the dungeon.



describes His desire for the Word of God to be more than much fine gold. To Him, the Word of God is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. On the contrary, a person who is rebellious despises the truth (Isaiah 30:9-10). This rather hear smooth things than the truth (Isaiah 30:9-10). This was the situation during Jeremiah's ministry. The deceits about **"peace; when there is no peace; when there is no"** (Jeremiah 8:11). When Jeremiah God to his own people, they they accused him of seeking of his people (Jeremiah 38:4). prophet and cast him into a no water but mire. In the end

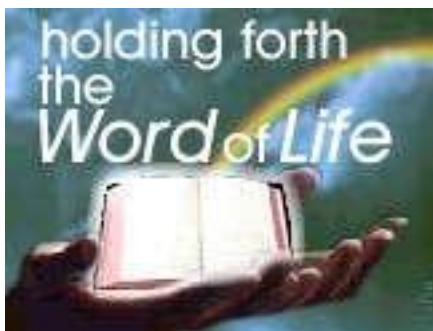
From Nehemiah 8, we make another amazing observation about the revived returnees. Their desire to hear the Word did not last just one day. The **"chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites"** gathered unto Ezra the next day to seek understanding of the law (v.13). Here were a people who will not be satisfied with just pure superficial understanding of the Scriptures! They were determined to study to show themselves approved unto God, as workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth (2 Timothy 2:15). How much time do we spend meditating on the grand truths that are contained in God's Word, that we might grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18)? Dearly beloved, the Bible is not to be read like a storybook. It contains gems of wisdom so fine that are waiting for us to discover. Let us seek rather to learn from the returnees' positive example and spend much time in the study of God's Word.

Verse 13 also teaches an important principle to all men. Fathers of homes and spiritual leaders in churches are to set an example by taking an active initiative to seek understanding of the Bible. By this, they can inculcate a zeal for the Word of God in their families or their flock. An example speaks a thousand words.

Note also from the passage that the Levites took effort to cause **"the people to understand the law"** (v. 7). Before the exile of the Jews, the people had many pastors who

fed their flock with lies and deceits, causing them to turn away from their God to worship false idols. Now, the people finally had dedicated and faithful teachers (and rightful ones, too, for the teaching ministry was only committed to the Levites) to feed them with spiritual food. What a blessing from God! By way of application, we have an important lesson here for spiritual leaders. Peter says in 1 Peter 5:2,3 – **“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock”**. A minister must always be willing to work for nothing, with only God’s glory in mind. Faithfulness in ministry is what God is looking for. Paul writes in 2 Timothy 2:2 – **“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also”**. Any church, ministry, or fellowship group must be committed to teaching the Bible and making disciples for Christ. The Bible must always be in the centre for any Christian body. Any Christian group whose focus is on numbers or “relevance” (such as the seeker-sensitive movement that is popularised by Rick Warren of Saddleback Church) rather than the Word of God, will ultimately fail in producing spiritual fruit. Rev (Dr) Timothy Tow illustrates this vividly by describing the disciples as being first trained in JESUS Bible College before graduating for mission work. Yet another example would be Apollos who was taken in and trained by Aquila and Priscilla before being released for missionary work (Acts 18:24-19:1). According to Dr. Jeffrey Khoo: “The Church needs *faithful* pastors, not ‘*payful*’ preachers whose motto is ‘more pay more preach, less pay less preach, no pay no preach’ **‘whose God is in their belly’** (says Paul in Philippians 3:19) and ‘whose religion is in their kitchen’ (adds Calvin).” A church will soon cease to function if its leaders are only out for self-glory and personal gain. How can there be revival if the leaders are only concerned for filthy lucre and their own honour rather than striving for the glory of God?

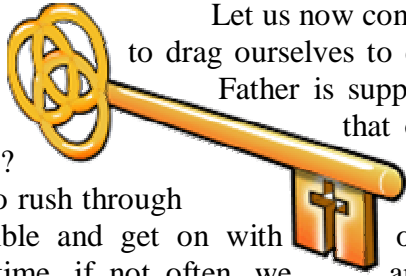
- (2) Secondly, there was **a sincere, humble and reverent devotion towards God**. After Ezra blessed the LORD, the people answered, **“Amen, Amen”** while lifting up their hands. Following this, they bowed down their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground (v.6). The people were aware that they were dealing with a thrice-holy God. This is heavenly worship (c.f. Revelation 4)!



What a far cry this is from the worship we have in churches today! For some, anything goes so long as the “experience” is right. Let the drums and the electric guitars enter the churches! Any music goes – even if it is loud and jarring music that distracts the congregation’s attention. Any lyrics go – so long as the name of Jesus is mentioned. Any doctrine is tolerated. Protestant and Roman Catholics – aren’t they one in Christ? What is the difference? Charismatism – we shouldn’t be too hard on it because it is a “non-essential” doctrine. Let the people worship anyway they want so long as “their heart is right”. What a myriad of excuses and false teaching! Allow me to ask, where is the reverence to God?

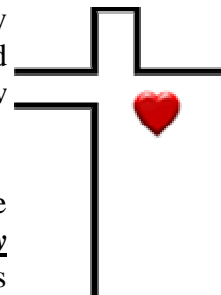
The sad truth, however, is that so called conservative reformed and fundamental churches are not fairing any better either. What we often see is dead orthodoxy. Worship service becomes a matter of procedure. The singing of hymns is done with no comprehension of the meaning behind the lyrics. Everything is just a matter of going through the motion. Is it not a common sight to see people nodding off in the pews while the sermon is being preached? Allow me to ask, where is the reverence to God?

Let us now consider even our own devotion time. Do we not often have to drag ourselves to do our own personal devotions? Communion with our Father is supposed to be the sweetest time of the day. Is it not ironic that our devotion time becomes a big boredom and a burden? How about our attitude in our devotions? Do we want to rush through our prayers? Do we want to quickly finish reading our Bible and get on with our work? If we are honest, we have to admit that some time, if not often, we are very haphazard in our devotions. I am guilty of this. Allow me to ask, where is the reverence to God?



Dearly beloved, let me submit to you that our impression of Jesus is often too one-sided. Many would like to think of Jesus as mild, meek, long-suffering and compassionate. Indeed, this is true. But let's not forget that this same Jesus "who healed the broken-hearted, and set the captives free" is also the same Jesus who pronounced woe after woe against the Pharisees. In fact, He pronounces woe upon them eight times in Matthew 23. In Revelation 5:5-6, Jesus is described as both a Lion and a Lamb. In Revelation 19, Jesus is pictured as a returning warrior who judges and makes war. Indeed, it is true that the Lord **"is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"** (2 Peter 3:9). But His longsuffering is not limitless. One day, He shall come and have His vengeance on those who reject Him.

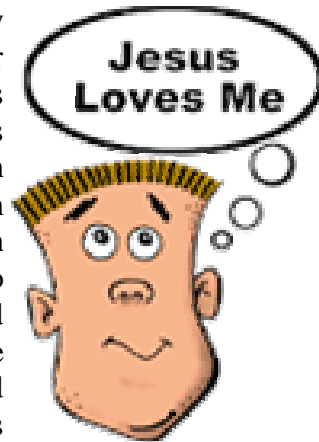
Beloved brethren, it is important for us to **understand our position before a holy God**. Before Him we are nothing but dust. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). We deserve eternal damnation and punishment in hell-fire! That should really humble us down on our knees. The returnees certainly understood their position before God. When the words of the law were read out, all the people wept (v.9). They realised the depth of their sin and mourned for their condition. The Word came to them not just in **"word only, but also in power"** (1 Thessalonians 1:5). They were a people of broken and contrite hearts, of such God will not despise (Psalm 51:17). John Bunyan puts it most appropriately – "A spirit rightly broken, a heart truly contrite, is to God an excellent thing". They are a people in whom repentance is strongly manifested. Repentance is necessary for salvation. Have you repented from your sins? To such a one, God will surely heal and bestow blessings upon Him.



However, the wonder does not end here. Notice that despite the mourning of the people, they were able to find joy in the Lord. **"The joy of the Lord is your strength"** (v.10). Why are they able to do so? It is because they realised that the Lord has showered them with grace and

mercy. They realised with that they are justified before Him. The LORD JEHOVAH has accepted them! Oh, what wondrous love! Oh, what amazing love! It is this joy that filled the disciples' hearts so that they count it worthy to suffer for Christ's name (Acts 5:41). It is this joy that caused Paul and Silas to sing praises unto God even when in prison (Acts 16:25). How very often do we see Christians with sad countenances! It is because we fail to realise the abundant riches that are available to us in Christ Jesus. Our Father has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). Most importantly, we have fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3). What better blessing and privilege can we have than that! Is that not a cause for great joy?

From this passage, we see that the children of Israel truly know who their God is. Their theology was not just in their heads but also in their hearts. A common problem that besets many churches with strong doctrinal teaching is "intellectualism". Such have Christ in their minds, but not in their hearts. They may have much knowledge of what is written in the Bible, but they have never truly believed in what is written in the wondrous Book, nor have they received spiritual insight to know the spiritual truths that are in the Word. Their works and actions testify against them. As Leonard Ravenhill puts it, there is a world of difference between knowing the Word of God and knowing the God of the Word. Have you known God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent (John 17:3)? **"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."** ~ Philippians 3:10!



Beloved reader, do you realize your position before God? Do you realize the depth of your sins? Do you mourn for your lost condition? Have you humbled yourself before God? Have you repented of your sins? Have you come to Christ and find joy in Him? Have you truly known Him? Dearly beloved, if you have not done so, do so now. Without doing so, you can never expect revival.

- (3) Thirdly, there was **zeal in obeying God's Word**. When the children of Israel realised that they were supposed to keep the festival of the booths (v.14, see also Leviticus 23:34-42; Deuteronomy 16:13-22), they immediately proceeded in keeping the feast. They also kept the feast with great gladness (v.17). This is in contrast to him who goes about keeping God's Word with great grumbling in his heart. This is also in contrast with the Pharisee who goes about keeping the law just to magnify his own righteousness. How did the people manage to keep God's commandments with such gladness? It is because they do it not out of a sense of duty, nor because they wanted to magnify their own righteousness, but out of love to God. Jesus put this principle most simply in John 14:15 – **"If ye love me, keep my commandments."**

By way of illustration, consider two servants who work for a master. One of them loves his master, while the other is apathetic towards his master's cause. Which one of

them will enjoy his work? Surely it is the one who loves his master. The other will only do his work out of a sense of duty, perhaps just to collect his wages. I am also sure that the one who loves his master will produce more “fruit”. Do you agree with me?

A common fault that we have among ourselves is that we often do not display much practical goodness in our lives. We may have all the scriptural knowledge, but Christ fails to shine through us. Why is that so? According to Leonard Ravenhill, many have adopted the convenient theory that the Bible is a Book to be explained, whereas first and foremost it is a Book to be believed (and after that to be obeyed). I agree with him. Far too often we have treated the Bible to be nothing more than a theological textbook. We have forgotten that true Christianity is often very practical.

The importance of obedience to God cannot be over-emphasised. **“And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”** says the Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 6:46. James exhorts us in James 1:22 to be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves. He then goes on in James 1:27 to declare that **“pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world”**. **“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren... My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth”** (1 John 3:16,18).

Remember the example of Jeremiah earlier on? The people tried to kill Jeremiah because they did not like the Word of God that was brought to them. Rather than obeying the Word of God and repent, the people rebelled. Did their actions prevent God’s judgement from coming down upon them? Not at all! **“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good”** (Numbers 23:19)? God says it, that settles it, I better believe and obey. Our unbelief and disobedience will never change the truth of God’s Word. Truth remains truth, and you can never destroy the truth.

Do you desire revival? If so, let the love of God constrain you to obey His Word, and let us shine as lights for Christ in this ungodly world of darkness (Matthew 5:16).

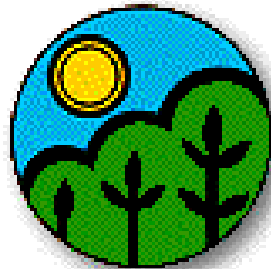
After considering the characteristics of true revival from a study of Nehemiah 8, it should be apparent to us now that Christendom today is NOT undergoing a major revival. Many of the so-called “revival meetings” have only temporal effects. Those who “professed” Christ during these “revival meetings” do not even understand the gospel message. Rather, one who is honest will observe that Christianity today is generally in a state of apathy. Our love towards Christ is cold and unfeeling. Moreover, truth and error is hardly distinguished among our churches today. Some



churches have fallen into the ecumenical movement. Others have lapsed into Charismatism. Some have welcomed the world into their churches via neo-evangelicalism. Lately, churches are facing two new “doctrines” that are threatening to invade the church. One of them is open-theism, which claims that God does not know everything about the future, openly attacking the omniscience of God. The second is neo-fundamentalism who portrays a God that is incapable of preserving all the inspired Words of His Scripture, subtly questioning the omnipotence and providence of God. In the face of so many errors, will there be any in the present generation who will have the courage of Nehemiah to rise up and proclaim the truth, earnestly contending for the faith as it was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3)?

In the face of such apathy in the Christian community, what can we do to have revival? Firstly, we must note from the passage that revivals are always “**Word-centered**” and “**God-centered**”. We must never lose focus on these two aspects of revivals. Following these, we must have:

- **PERSEVERANCE.** How can we expect revival to come if we do not ever seek Him sincerely in prayer, and proclaim His Word? How can we ever expect revival to come if we do not put in effort to understand His Word? There are no short cuts. We must fulfill our human responsibility to actively seek His face, and ask for the Holy Spirit to revive us. The LORD said to Israel in 2 Chronicles 7:14 – “*If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land*”. God also said to the Israelites in Jeremiah 29:13 – “*And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart*”.
- **PATIENCE.** We must remember that revival only comes in God’s own timing and will. Remember that the empowering of the disciples by the Holy Spirit only came at the appointed day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). The problem of many seeking spiritual growth and change is that they expect change to appear in a twinkling of an eye. Not so, my dear friends. We must be patient.
- Lastly, one must apply the first principle that is echoed by both Calvin and Augustine – “**HUMILITY, HUMILITY, HUMILITY**”. God looks to one that is of a contrite heart, even to one that trembles at His Word (Isaiah 66:2). “*For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth*” (Isaiah 57:15-16a). “*Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up*” (James 4:10).



*Lord, send the old time power, The Pentecostal power!
Thy floodgates of blessing on us throw open wide!*

*Lord, send the old time power, the Pentecostal power!
That sinners be converted and Thy name glorified!*

How long do we have to wait for Thy reviving presence? Revive Thy work, O Lord!

Amen.

Clement
1 Tim 1:15
19 May 2004

*This article is specially dedicated to the FEBC Young People's Fellowship and the Fundamental Christian Ministry (FCM).

Bible Baffle Questions:

1. Which prophet said to a king: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."?
2. Who in the OT had a vision of the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven?
3. Which OT prophet forecast an "abomination of desolation"?
4. In which book was the equation seventy times seven used to prophesy in advance of the year of the coming Messiah?
5. Who was given a vision to explain what would befall his people in the latter days?
6. What OT prophet foretold in detail 200 years of history of the Greek Empire?
7. Which book makes the following prophecy: "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god"?
8. Which book prophesies about a latter day despot, saying "the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps"?
9. Which OT book says that multitudes asleep in the dust will awake to everlasting life or contempt?
10. Which OT prophet said that at the time of the end: "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased."?



Ans on page 22

**Report on Missions trip to Kemaman
Life B-P Church (1st – 4th June 2004) -- testimonies**

1) Report cum Testimony by Charmaine

When Brother Jun Sheng first sent out the email appealing for volunteers to go to Kemaman, I was not keen at all. The prospect of having to conduct a DVBS for the children there with people I hardly knew, and in a language I



was barely conversant in (Mandarin!) was daunting to say the least. Nonetheless, thank God that by His providence, I was led to sign up for the trip, for it has proved to be a rich blessing unto all who went.

The team comprised Brother Jun Sheng, Clement & Herbert, Sister Christine, Ailin, and myself. During preparation, we divided ourselves into three groups, with Brother Clement and Herbert preparing to minister to the youths, Sister Ailin in charge of the Upper Primary kids, and Sister Christine and myself tasked with teaching the Lower Primary students. Brother Jun Sheng was to be the team leader and facilitator, which allowed the rest of us to concentrate solely on teaching. The theme of the DVBS for the children was to be **'The 10 Commandments,'** which we hoped would convict their young hearts of the need for salvation. The knowledge of God's laws would also be practical guidelines for them to please Him in their daily lives.

1st June Tuesday

We met early, and managed to catch a yummy kopitiam breakfast before setting off. Even though the trip had barely begun, we had prayer requests aplenty to lay before God. Sis Christine and myself had been plagued with cough and flu symptoms ever since the FCM camp just a week earlier, and with most of us tired out from the camp and preparations for the trip, the appeal for God to sustain us was very urgent. Thankfully, we were able to get some rest on the bus, as most of the day was spent travelling.

Upon arrival in Kemaman, we headed straight for the one and only A&W restaurant to fill our empty bellies. Dr Wee very kindly agreed to put us up at his house, and we were able to rest (and eat some more!) there before Bible Study in the evening. This was a weekly Bible Study session usually

but since Brother Jun Wee was able to take a rest! Brother Jun Sheng shared from 1 Samuel 16, about how the LORD led Samuel David as the next king. The study was conducted in an interactive manner, and many thought-relevant issues were raised. After this followed a short time of sharing, where each of us spoke of the lessons we had learnt from the night's session and found the evening's discussion and exhortation from God's Word particularly appropriate as we prepared our hearts for the start of the DVBS.



We were reminded that in every instance God is in control, and will provide, just as He provided a king for the Israelites after Saul turned away from Him. Personally, I was prompted to set my heart right before God as I prepared to serve Him, for **"the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart"** ~ 1 Samuel 16:7. High on the prayer lists was the request that God grant us

journeying mercies and that the camp would run smoothly, especially as Dr and Mrs Wee were to be held responsible for the safety of all the children.

2nd June Wednesday

Thank God that all of us arrived at the campsite without mishap, and the camp schedule proceeded as planned, albeit with some delay due to the hotel's tardiness in preparing lunch. This repeated delay of mealtimes was to plague us throughout the camp, though it caused only minor hiccups in the programme, thanks to Bro Jun Sheng's constant efforts to keep the kitchen staff to task. However, the greatest challenge we experienced during the camp came from the discovery that there had been some miscommunication regarding the grouping of the DVBS classes. Instead of dividing the children according to ages, we now had to divide them according to language proficiency, as some children were wholly unable to understand English. Thus, Sis Christine and I found ourselves faced with the task of conducting all our lessons in Mandarin. Also, as a result of the new grouping, we would be dealing with kids within a wide age range of 7 – 13, which made it difficult to tailor the lessons for the needs of each age group. It was a humbling experience to have to relearn the basics of Christianity in Mandarin, and we found ourselves stumbling over phrases like 'Our Father in Heaven' and 'In Jesus' Name' as we tried to pray in an unfamiliar tongue. All glory must go to God that despite the language barrier, Christine and I were able not only to minister to the children, but also to establish rapport with them through games, songs, and friendly banter. Through it all, I could not help but think of what God said to Moses, **"Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."** ~ Exodus 4:12. More than ever, I realized that God's work goes on in spite of us and our weaknesses, and it is but a privilege if He chooses to let us serve Him in any way.

Otherwise, the rest of the day's programme ran smoothly, and we ended with a time of Dorm Fellowship with the youths. As Sis Ai Lin was Dorm i/c for the girls, she led us in a few favourites from 'Then Sings My Soul,' and we all took turns to share our testimonies following that. The girls were rather shy and quiet, but we were moved to share with them how each of us came to commit our lives to God, and were touched to see how many of them had a simple, child-like faith in Him.



3rd June Thursday

This was the second last day of the DVBS, and the most packed of them all. The kids' programme included three lessons, one handicraft session, and sports and games. There was also to be a barbeque at night. Thank God for granting us the energy to conduct the various

programmes, for when I look back now, I find it difficult to see how we lasted, when even one normal Sunday school lesson is enough to leave me tired. Perhaps some credit must be given to the children as well, for I found them much better behaved than those back here in Singapore. During the handicraft session, it was heart-warming to see the effort they put into decorating a simple poster printed with the 10 commandments. Conducting the games for them was also a joy, as they participated enthusiastically even when we made them do silly-looking things like skipping to and fro with pieces of raffia! I was somewhat saddened that we could not stay longer, as their need for guidance and instruction in the Christian walk is very evident, especially as the church has a lack of Chinese-speaking workers in the children's ministry. However, I am directed once again to think of 1 Samuel 16. Indeed, the LORD will provide the workers. Could it be that one of you reading this might be called to help? The rest of us can also do much by keeping this little church in our prayers.

Once again, the busy day came to an end as the girls met for Dorm Fellowship. Though we were all tired, especially the youths, as they had been busy cooking during the barbeque (20 chickens!), our final night together was sweet. It was only the second time we had met with most of them, but the LORD blessed us with frank sharing. I found them so earnest and sincere in their faith, even at such a tender age, and I pray that God will continue to guide these young sisters as they seek His will in their lives.

4th June Friday

The morning was a blur of lesson summaries and fond farewells as we prepared to leave the campsite. Tired as we were, the team was grateful for time to rest and recharge when we finally returned to Dr Wee's house. For me, it was a time to reflect on the LORD's many providences and blessings. Though by this time, Bro Clement too had fallen ill, God had sustained the entire team throughout the camp such that as we carried out His work, we were able to take no thought for our own minor afflictions. Once, when Sis Christine was teaching the kids to play a game, I remember being sure that she was about to lose her voice, as it had become hoarse, but she herself seemed to be oblivious to it, caught up as she was in the children's excitement. Truly, God's blessings have far outweighed any 'suffering' we have had to endure on this trip. The fellowship among the team members has also been sweet, and it is undeniable that it was God's grace which allowed us to laugh and share with each other even while suffering from fatigue and stress.



As the trip drew to a close, we were treated to a sumptuous dinner by Dr and Mrs Wee, before attending the Friday worship service. The team presented the song, 'May the Lord Find Us Faithful,' which hopefully ministered to the congregation as much as it convicted us even as we sang it. After the service, it was a rush to catch the bus back home to Singapore. Thank God that all of us arrived home safely, albeit tired, but with a renewed conviction to serve Him.

In the past two weeks, first with the FCM camp, and then with this Kemaman missions trip, I have been forced to rely on God's strength in ways in which I might not have been willing to yield otherwise. If there's one lesson I've learnt, it is to keep one's hands and feet willing and ready to serve God, for it is only through service and dedication that He is able to mould us into whom we must become in Christ. The recent FCM camp theme verse comes to mind:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" ~Romans 12:1-2.

May we all go out and do something for the LORD, that we may see His words come to life in our lives!

In His love,
Charmaine
FCM Arts/Engineering
New Life Bible-Presbyterian Church



2) Report by Clement

The following is a report concerning the Kemaman Youth Camp that was held concurrently with the Daily Vacation Bible School for the children. It serves as a supplementary to Charmaine's report on the missions trip.

Both Herbert and I were assigned to teach on the topic "Knowing God's Will" to the youth, ranging from ages 13-19. We prepared a total of five theme messages, namely:

Knowing God's Will – An Introduction (Ephesians 5:1-18)
God's Word – Our Sure Guide (Psalm 119:105, 2 Timothy 3:16)
Do All Things For God's Glory (1 Corinthians 10:31)
In Every Thing Give Thanks (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)
A Living Sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2)

In our messages, we focused on the various aspects of God's will (directive, cooperative, punitive, preceptive, permissive, desiderative and decretive), minus the terminologies of course. We encouraged them to read the Word as the means of knowing His will, as well as to draw out practical applications in life regarding God's will for His children.

Besides the five theme messages, we also prepared two night messages:

Not Willing that All Should Perish (2 Peter 3:9)
No Fellowship With Darkness – Biblical Separation (2 Corinthians 6:4-7:1)



Learning from my previous experience in teaching the youth in Kemaman during the earlier missions trip in 2003, we were able to prepare some of the problems and peculiarities we might face while teaching the youth. As such, we decided to adopt a more discussion-style approach to all the messages. The youth are generally shy and quiet. Hence, it took us quite some effort before we could get them to start talking. However, after the initial shyness, they were a lot more open with us when we tried to engage them in discussion. We were able to understand them better and minister more appropriately to their current situations and problems. They were also very attentive during all the messages, sitting humbly to hear the Word of God. I do not recall seeing any of them yawn during the messages, despite being very tired. This is something positive which we should try and learn from.

Besides the messages, we also held a forum concerning Christian decisions. We thank God that Aunty Helen (the wife of Rev. Wee Eng Moh, who is the Bible Study leader of NTU/NIE FCM) is able to join and help us in answering the questions from the youth. Her experience helped us address a lot of questions that we would otherwise have much difficulty in answering. Questions that were posed to us included topics on Christian Liberty, Assurance of Faith, Relationships with Parents and Personal Evangelism.

Besides the messages, we also had time for fun and games. The youth played “Captain’s Ball” on the second day of camp. I did not join them, as I was sick. However, Herbert, Charmaine and Christine joined in the game. I heard that the game was played at a very fast pace. It must be true because I hardly see Herbert so tired after a game (he was a basketball player). Well, what a pity that I could not join in the fun **L**. Maybe next time...

We also had morning devotions during the camp. The first morning devotion was by Jun Sheng who spoke on Daniel 1. He also engaged the youth with various object lessons. One of them was a tissue paper that was emerged in some “special formula” so that it will not burn when placed under a flame. The second was a torch that does not work on batteries. I am sure that some who attended the FCM camp can recall the latter. Still wondering how it works? Let me give you a hint: Recall Lenz’s law. Sorry, I can only reveal that much as I am not supposed to reveal trade secrets **J**. On the second day, I gave a devotion from Luke 19:1-10, showing how God calls a sinner (in this case Zaccheus) unto repentance.

In conclusion, it was a very fruitful experience serving the Lord in Kemaman. Both Herbert and I truly enjoyed ministering to the youth. The only pity was that time could only



permit us to deliver 4 out of the 5 theme messages. Nevertheless, all of us found great joy learning from the Word of God and we pray that the Word might indeed dwell richly in our hearts, changing us so that we might be more conformed to the image of Christ. Do pray for the youth, as many of them will leave the small town of Kemaman after Form 6 to further their studies, or to work. Pray that they might form strong convictions to continue in the faith even as they enter into new surroundings.

How about us who want to find out more about knowing God's Will? I can recommend two books. The first is "Steps for Guidance" by Dr. Peter Masters and published by Wakeman Publications. The second is "The Clock of the

"You'e better come for the FCM camp, or else.."

Sevenfold Will of God" by Rev. (Dr) Timothy Tow, published by Far Eastern Bible College Press. These two books have been invaluable help to me. I hope that those who read might indeed find much edification in reading them too. More importantly, if one seeks to know His will, one must continue to read His Word and abide in it. **"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"** (Psalm 119:105).

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:17). Amen.

In-Christ,
Clement
1 Timothy 1:15
FCM NUS (Science)
FEBC Lord's Day Service Congregation at RELC

3) Testimony by Clement



It is my joy to give a short sharing about my experience in the FCM missions trip to Kemaman Life Bible-Presbyterian Church from 1 June to 4 June 2004. This is my second time taking part in the yearly endeavour by FCM. In my sharing last year, I wrote that I would definitely make another missions trip to Kemaman if I had another chance to do so. Indeed, God has been gracious to give me the opportunity and privilege to serve Him again in Kemaman Life BPC. I can only give Him all praise and thanks. It is also my

privilege to serve with the following FCMers – Junsheng (our group leader – who else?), Herbert, Ai Lin, Charmaine (the reporter of the group) and Christine. They are all wonderful team members. J

I recall during the last missions trip, I was not at all prepared to teach the youth as I had never taught the Bible before. I had to cast my care on God and depend on His grace. For this missions trip, both Herbert and me were assigned to teach the topic “Knowing God’s Will” to the youth. This is by no means an easy topic to teach to any youth group in Singapore, let alone to the youth in Kemaman who have limited command of English. Nevertheless, by God’s grace, we were able to complete the preparation of the messages before the trip. Both Herbert and me are co-labourers in the same ministry, so we are very familiar working with each other. This rapport helped a lot in our preparation, and also the holding of the youth camp in Kemaman. Thank God that I have such a like-minded brother in Christ to work with on this missions trip.

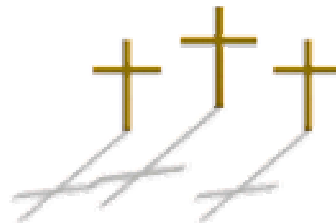
Upon returning to Kemaman, it is very comforting to see that many of the youth I had taught a year ago were still around. In fact, some of them have matured so much in the faith that I could not almost recognise them. What an encouragement to see that they have grown spiritually within a year! Some of them who were kids a year or two ago are now fine men and women of Christ. God’s work in them is indeed marvellous.

For the rest of the days, both Herbert and me were busy conducting the youth camp. Both of us enjoyed interacting and learning about God’s will together with the youth from Kemaman. For further details, please refer to the report on the youth camp.

What are the lessons that I have learnt from this missions trip?

1. **God’s providence and grace.** I fell sick with flu and a sore throat on the afternoon of the third day in Kemaman, and I feared I would lose my voice. Nevertheless, by His wonderful care and grace, He sustained my voice and health to last through the entire youth camp. “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9). This brings into mind the words of a hymn which I have come to love:

*I hear the Saviour say,
“Thy strength indeed is small!
Child of weakness, watch and pray,
Find in Me thine all in all”.*



I am very grateful that He took care of me so well in my trip to Kemaman. I will also like to thank all who have prayed for the missions team to Kemaman. Your prayers for us were invaluable.

2. **To be thankful of what we have in Singapore.** At the place where we were staying, the meals were often delayed. The water heater and the air-conditioner in the rooms were initially spoilt. There was also a lack of drinking water. The temptation is to complain

about all the things around us. But we took heart from Auntie Helen's (Rev. Wee's wife) sharing that the conditions in Kenya were 100 times worse. Thinking about Kenya makes things all the more bearable. "In everything give thanks" (1 Thessalonians 5:18a).

In Kemaman Life BPC, there is no full-time pastor or preacher to lead the church. The church has to depend on various ministers who travel from Singapore to preach to them every week for their Friday Lord's Day service. In Singapore, we have faithful pastors, preachers and teachers who minister God's Word to us week in and week out. Do we appreciate them? Do we thank God for the blessing of faithful ministers? Do we pray for more to enter into full-time ministry? Do we pray for our leaders who have charge over the affairs of the church? This is indeed great food for thought.

Besides the lack of ministers of the Word, Kemaman Life BPC only has one pianist for their worship service. Should the pianist not be around, the whole congregation would have to sing acapella! In Singapore, we have an abundance of people who can play the piano and the organ for our worship services. We also have people who can play the guitar for our youth meetings. Do we give thanks to God for all these people? Let us appreciate their service!

3. **Faithfulness to God.** It never fails to amaze me how a deacon and his wife can run the entire church by themselves. Dr. Wee leads two weekly Bible studies for the adults and youth. Mrs. Wee runs almost the entire church administration by herself. It is only lately that they have an FEBC graduate, Merlin, to help them out. Their faithfulness is both an encouragement and a rebuke to me. When the Lord comes, will He find us faithful?



In addition, Kemaman Life BPC is taking a stand for the verbal plenary preservation of the scriptures. This truly takes a lot of courage. Taking such a stand can mean deprivation of fellowship from some churches. For a church that is much dependent upon ministers in Singapore for help, taking such a stand may mean many difficulties in the future. Yet, the church takes the stand for the Word of God in full confidence that the Lord will definitely provide. If you honour God, God will honour you in His own good time and way. Which Christian will not face problems in life? I know not one. If a small church as Kemaman can take a stand for the perfect "jot and tittle" preservation of God's Word, what is stopping us from doing the same in Singapore? "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10). Will our generation stand for the Word of God?

I have truly learnt much from the trip to Kemaman. I am not able to put down all my thoughts in this short sharing, but I thank God for all that He has taught me in this missions trip.

Besides all the lessons, I will remember this missions trip for one thing - the amazing number of videos and digital photos taken. Yes, our main way of relaxing was to take photos and videos. Some of these videos are rather interesting too. Should you be interested, try obtaining these photos and videos from the nearest Kemaman Mission Trip member. Hopefully, the person will oblige. **J**

We went to Kemaman Life BPC to minister and to encourage, but we end up being encouraged by our Malaysian brethren instead. What more can we ask? All praise and glory be unto Him, and to His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Please continue to pray for Kemaman Life BPC. Amen.

In-Christ,
Clement

1 Timothy 1:15

FCM NUS (Science)

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4) Testimony by Ai Lin

Kemaman missions trip 2004 had proved to be a spiritually fruitful and fulfilling one for me. The 3 day camp was one that was packed with lessons to teach the children the Ten Commandments, which was also our DVBS theme. Amongst the 11 children I taught, all of them were very attentive to the Bible stories that were shared with them. For their attentiveness I deeply appreciate, as our team was short of the visual resources we need to show the children the Bible stories we were narrating. Much of what I taught the children was done verbally and through the reading of Bible passages. (This is a stark contrast to the children I teach in Sunday School in Singapore, where our children are very visual learners, partly because they are so widely exposed to the MTV age.)

Also, I was greatly encouraged by the children's interest in knowing more about the Word of God. Although many of the sentences in the Bible were difficult for them to understand, the children seemed to have even more perseverance than me the teacher, to find out and know more Bible stories! Some of them were even asking me, "Sister Ai Lin, when is the next lesson starting?" It was simply one word for description - encouraging. :)

I thank God for helping me to relate our theme for the DVBS to the gospel message, which is so important to convey to the children that without God's salvation grace, we can

never obey God's law with our own human strength. I also found out that some of the children in my class have not accepted the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour, and pray that the Holy Spirit will move their hearts to turn to God for repentance of their sins and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their only Lord and Saviour.

Through the rigorous teaching schedule the 6 of us were put through for the 3 day camp, I have personally grown and benefited spiritually from my own teaching preparations. Bible passages which I thought I already knew began to shed new perspectives on my understanding of God's Word as I read through them again. I thank God that for using my teaching preparations to help me know how to be more effective in my ministry to my own students in Singapore.

I thank God for using the 6 of us to minister to the children and the youths in Kemaman Life B-P Church. Presently, the church is in great need of Chinese-speaking preachers and teachers, as majority of the residents in Kemaman are Chinese-speaking. I like to encourage those of you who can speak, understand and communicate in Chinese well to consider ministering to our brethren in Kemaman. The Lord will bless your service too, and sacrifice for Him, if you know you have responded to the right calling.

In closing, I like to share this verse from the Psalmist,

Ps. 119:97 – *“O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.”*

May God's Word be the meditation in our hearts all of today, and everyday.
Amen.

Yours in Christ,
Ai Lin

5) Testimony by Christine

This was my first trip to Kemaman though I've heard of the ministry there before. Thank God for a smooth journey and we arrived safely, to enjoy the very welcoming food of A&W having missed lunch. The first day was spent settling in and the real work only started on Day 2. That was when Charmaine and myself were told we'd have to teach in Mandarin instead, but thank God for the few teenage girls and Charmaine who helped to translate a little along the way. We were then put in charge of teaching kids from P1 to Sec 1 but by God's grace it went on smoothly despite the worry of 'neglecting' the older Sec 1 youth.

The children were less boisterous than I thought they'd be, thank God they were relatively obedient. This trip gave me an insight into the Malaysian

