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## *The AG Singapore EXCO wishes everyone a Blessed New Year*

"You crown the year with Your goodness,  
And Your paths drip with abundance." Psalm 65:11



ACTS College's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Pg 10



Shekinah AG 27<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Pg 14



The Journey to Gold – Pg 18





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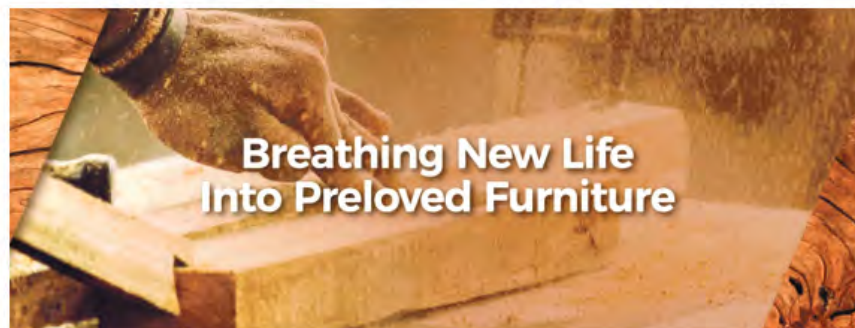
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# Stay on Track



By Rev Dominic Yeo

Road trips. We love them for their fluidity to take in all the sights that we want. We follow maps, and now with GPS, there's no fear to go on a detour to see something that catches your eye. Detours—some are good, and some are bad. In life, detours can be devastating if not well managed. It can unfold in a wrong direction that will lead you astray. If it is not dealt with swiftly, it can become a permanent decision with regrets. While we can't go back in time to avoid the detours we take, we can pause and turn the rudder on our ship back to the plans of God for our lives.

God invites us to start fresh no matter where we are in our journey of life, so that we can get on the road toward our destiny. 2018 is a brand new year and we can have a new beginning in God! The new year is like a marker for many of us to reset, restart and recalibrate. How crucial it is for us to evaluate our lives and chart the way forward! But how does one stay on course and avoid deadly detours when we aren't sure of where God wants us to go?

Let's look at Joshua 3:3-4: "...When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the Levitical priests carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before..."

## Focus

Joshua and all the Israelites had set out from Shittim and went to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over. In essence, they were waiting. They were waiting for the next move, for they had no idea how they were going to cross over, much less conquer the walls of Jericho.

After three days, in verse 3, they were instructed to "see the ark of the covenant". They weren't asked to observe the river tides or the guard shifts on the walls of Jericho. They were commanded to "see"—to keep their focus on God and the priests.

In life, we could be distracted by problems or even open doors, going on a wild goose chase after things that are not of God. I believe we need to have focus this coming year. Focus on what God is saying. This requires a close and intimate walk with the Lord. We need to pull ourselves away from all the 'chaos' and resolve not to move unless God moves. We need to also focus on what our leadership is saying as God reveals His plans to them. This requires us to be united in heart and mind with our leadership so that we do not allow the enemy to sow discord and distract us from our corporate destiny as a church!

## Follow

While we learn to focus, the second component to stay on course is to follow. We read how the Israelites have to "move out and follow" once they see the ark of the covenant move.

The truth is, we can "see" the move of God and "hear" the clarion call of leadership but fail to move. Therefore, we miss it and go on an unwanted detour. Following God requires perseverance and faith.

The river did not move and the waters did not spilt into dry ground, but they had to press on and walk into the waters. They did not know how God was going to enable the crossing but they kept their focus on the ark of the covenant and took each step in faith. The Israelites had many opportunities to detour and turn around. They could have turned back and never crossed the Jordan at all. They could have stopped circling the walls on the sixth day and never conquered Jericho. But they followed God every step of the way.

Never let a detour or a distraction become a derailment of God's plan for your life. Be resolved to fix your focus on God and follow Him regardless of how daunting the path may seem to be. Decide today to be fully focused on His dreams and plans for your life.

Have a faith-filled 2018 in the Lord!

## 不偏左右

自由行。我们喜欢它的可变动性，并能够任凭自己的喜好把美景尽收眼底。我们看地图，或者自动定位系统，不怕一时被什么吸引而改变行程绕道而行。绕道有时是好的，有时则不好。在生命中，绕道如果没有处理好，可能会带来严重的后果。如果不及时处理，可能误入歧途，遗憾终身。虽然我们无法让时间倒流避开曾绕过的远

路，但是我们能够停下，转舵，回到神的旨意中。

不论我们的生命旅程处在哪个阶段，神都邀请我们重新开始，好重新上路进入神给我们的命定。2018年是个全新的一年，我们能够在主里有一个全新的开始！新的一年对于我们许多人来说是一个回归起点、重新开始、重新调整的界标。因此，评价自己的生命，规划前面的道路是何等重要！然而，如果我们不清楚神要我们往哪里去，我们又怎么能前行而不偏左右，避免绕远路？

让我们看看约书亚记3:3-4 “你们看见耶和华——你们神的约柜，又见祭司利未人抬着，就要离开所住的地方，跟着约柜去。...使你们知道所当走的路，因为这条路你们向从来没有走过。”

## 专注

约书亚和以色列百姓从什亭前往约旦河。他们在过河之前在那里扎营。实际上，他们在等，等候下一步。因为他们不知道如何过去，更别说怎么胜过耶利哥的城墙。

我们在第三节看到，三天后，官长吩咐他们“看...耶和华你的神的约柜”。他们并没有被指示观察河的水位或耶利哥城守卫的站岗时间。他们被吩咐“看”，把他们的焦点集中在神和祭司身上。

在生命中，我们可能被问题，甚至敞开的门模糊了焦点，而疯狂地追寻不从神而来的事物。我相信今年我们必须专注，专注于神所说的，而这需要我们与神保持亲密的关系。我们必须把自己从所有“混乱”中抽离出来，并且下决心除非神动了，我们不动。我们需要专注于领导层所说的话，因为神把祂的计划向他们揭示。这就需要我们与领导层同心合一，以不至于让敌人有虚可乘，制造分歧，使我们分心，不能实现神给这个集体——教会的旨意。

## 跟随

我们行在道路上，不偏左右，除了要专注，也要跟随。我们看到以色列人一看到约柜移动就必须离开和跟随。真相是，我们能“看见”神的移动，能“听见”领导的号召，但是却不移。因此，就错过了机会而要绕道而行。跟随需要坚持和信心。河并没有挪开，水并没有分开露出干地，但是他们必须坚持，走进河里。他们不知道神会怎么让他们过河，但是他们的焦点在约柜上，踏出信心的每一步。以色列人有许多机会绕道而行。他们甚至可以转身离开，不过约旦河了。他们攻打耶利哥城时可以在第六天停止绕城，因而无法夺城。但是他们踏出的每一步都跟随着神。

不要让绕道或搅扰使你从神的计划中脱轨。要决心专注于神，跟随着祂，不论前路多艰辛。今天就决定全心专注于祂在你生命中的计划和梦想。

愿你在主里有个信心满满的2018年！

## TRAINING

# Have Mercy on Me – Four Glimpses into the Heart of God

By David Mathis, *desiringGod.org*

The mercy of God is one of the most precious realities in the world, one of the most revealing themes in all the Bible, and one of the most tragically misunderstood truths about God. If you want to know who God really is, if you want to peek into his heart, it is not the display of his just wrath and cosmic power to which you should look. Rather, set your eye on his mercy, without minimizing the fullness of his might, and take in the life-changing panorama.

Many of us today are prone, by nature and nurture, to see God's mercy as peripheral or incidental to who he is. We suspect that perhaps he shows mercy by accident or weakness. But if we let the Scriptures have their say, we will see that when God shows his mercy, he does so with utter intentionality and strength, and we as his creatures get our deepest glimpse of who he is not just in his sovereignty but his goodness. Not simply in his greatness but his gentleness. Not only in his towering might but also in his surprising tenderness.

“God does not show mercy by  
accident or weakness, but always  
with utter intentionality and strength.”



But God's mercy not only shows us who he is, but also tells us something essential about ourselves. That we have been shown mercy means not only that we didn't deserve his favor, but that we deserved his righteous hammer against the anvil of justice. Our cry for mercy admits to our ill-deserving, not just undeserving. By rights, we should be under his impending wrath, like all mankind (Ephesians 2:3)—but for the “*tender mercy of our God*” (Luke 1:78).

But we are not the first to peer into his heart and catch a glimpse of his fatherly posture toward us. God has made the world to turn again and again on fresh revelations of his mercy.

### Moses Saw Mercy

The first great glimpse of God's mercy came to Moses. In one of the most important passages in all the Bible, after Moses has asked God to show him his glory, God answers, “*I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘The Lord.’ And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy*” (Exodus 33:19).

When asked to show his glory, God puts his goodness in grace and mercy on display—and his utter freedom in showing his mercy to whomever he

chooses. Israel may not be all that more righteous than Pharaoh and the Egyptians, but God's mercy on Israel is not based on Israel's efforts and earning. Rather, God, as God, is utterly free to show mercy to whom he will—and he has chosen to be merciful to his people.

Just a few verses later, as he passes Moses by, God proclaims, “*The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.*” (Exodus 34:6-7)

God is not unjust; by no means will he clear the guilty and sweep sin under the rug. But the leading revelation of his glory is his mercy. The first and greatest truth for his people to know about him is he is “a God merciful and gracious.” His grace and mercy shine as the apex of his glory. He is “slow to anger”—he will show wrath, and justly so. It would be unloving to his people if he did not get angry when they were threatened and assaulted. And yet even in such justice, he is slow to anger. Wrath is his righteous response to evil, but it is not his heart. Justice is the stem; mercy is the flower.

### David Fell on Mercy

Moses's glimpse of the merciful God rightly became the leading revelation in Israel. It would be remembered, even as his people turned their backs to him, “*the Lord your God is gracious and merciful and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him*” (2 Chronicles 30:9). The prophets celebrated him as “*gracious and merciful*” (Isaiah 30:18; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2), but the Psalms in particular basked in his mercy (see Psalm 86:5; 103:8; 111:4; 116:5; and 145:8-9, among others).

It should be no surprise, then, that Israel's great psalmist-king, David, would cast himself utterly on the mercy of God. He began his great song of confession, Psalm 51, “*Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions*” (Psalm 51:1).

“Wrath is God's righteous response  
to evil, but it is not his heart. Justice  
is the stem; mercy is the flower.”



Later, when David recognized his sin against God by numbering the people, the prophet Gad gave him three options for God's discipline: “*Shall three years*

*of famine come to you in your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in your land?*” (2 Samuel 24:13). David had glimpsed the heart of God, and he knew where to fall: “*Let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into the hand of man*” (2 Samuel 24:14).

### Jeremiah Wept for Mercy

In the generations after David, Israel fell into a spiral of moral decline. Eventually came the bleak moment Moses had foreseen as inevitable in the hard and wandering hearts of the people. In 587 BC the Babylonians besieged, conquered, and decimated Jerusalem. It was the most tragic and horrific moment in all the Old Testament. The city was so famished and desperate that women boiled and ate their own babies (Lamentations 4:10).

Into these blackest of times, the prophet Jeremiah penned the darkest and most despairing verses in all the Bible: the book of Lamentations. Chapter 3 is the heart of his lament, where the pain is most exposed, and hope seems almost lost. Yet even here, faith shines forth as the prophet gets a glimpse into the heart of God through his mercy.

*Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall! My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him” (Lamentations 3:19-24).*

In the very time and the very place where God's people would be most tempted to abandon hope, the prophet points to the mercies of God, never ceasing and new every day.

### Paul Marveled at Mercy

Then, in the fullness of time, God sent his own Son not simply to dispense his mercy, but to embody it. Jesus is the Mercy of God made human. He didn't just teach his people to echo God's mercy in their lives (Matthew 5:7; 18:33; Luke 6:36; Luke 10:37), but he himself was, and is, the mercy of God to us. Fittingly, the most prominent request made of Jesus in the Gospels is, “*Have mercy on me!*” (Matthew 9:27; 15:22; 17:15; 20:30-31; Mark 10:47-48; Luke 16:24; 17:13; 18:13, 38-39), which is precisely what he did in his perfect life, sacrificial death, and triumphant resurrection—extending God's mercy not just to Israel, but to all the nations by faith.

*Continued on pg 15...*



# The Fear of God

By Rev Dr Wilson Teo, TCA College

*What is our understanding of “the fear of God” and how do we live out this teaching in our Christian life? Rev Dr Teo examines the meaning behind this truth.*

## What is the Fear of God?

The Bible has many references to the concept of the fear of God. Both the Old and New Testaments use various phrases such as the “fear of God”, “fear of the Lord”, “fear God”, and “fear the Lord” that refer to the same concept.

What does it mean to have a fear of God?

We need to first understand this concept before we can live and experience this truth. Let us examine this concept scripturally.

Bible dictionaries describe the concept in three possible motifs that are used throughout the scriptures, and they are namely:

- a reverent awe of God;
- a deep personal piety in worshipping and obeying God; and
- a strong faith in God.

All these three motifs express a life of strong devotion and obedience to God. Such a godly lifestyle releases divine blessings into one's life.

## How is the Fear of God seen in Psalm 128?

The Bible provides many good examples of how believers should live out the fear of God. Psalm 128 is one such example as it examines the nature of the fear of God, its effects on one's life, and implications for marriage and children.

### Psalm 128

- <sup>1</sup> *Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in obedience to him.*
- <sup>2</sup> *You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours.*
- <sup>3</sup> *Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table.*
- <sup>4</sup> *Yes, this will be the blessing for the man who fears the LORD.*

Verse 1 begins with a powerful declaration of promise that divine blessings will follow all who fear the Lord. However, the word “all” does not refer to everyone in general but only to those who walk in obedience to Him. The fear of God has a strong correlation with walking in obedience to the Lord Jesus.

## How does one walk in obedience to the Lord?

One walks in obedience through the following ways:

- obeying God's Word (Deuteronomy 10:13; 1 Samuel 12:14);
- serving and worshipping God with all of one's heart and soul (Deuteronomy 10:12; 2 Chronicles 19:9); and
- avoiding all forms of evil (Proverbs 3:7, 8:13, 14:16).

The moment one chooses to fear God and walks in obedience to the Lord, the blessed outcome is promised in the following verses.

Verse 2 explains that the outcome is the release of God's blessing and prosperity through the enjoyment of the fruit of one's labor. Historically, most Israelites were farmers and the crops of their harvests were vital for their yearly survival. Every farmer looked forward to the harvest of their crops to enjoy the fruits of their labor with their families. This blessing to enjoy the fruit of one's labor was of an important significance to every ancient Jewish family.

In our contemporary context, when God promises that we will enjoy the fruit of our labor, it means that we can enjoy life and all that we have worked for without worry, turmoil and painful toil. (Proverbs 10:22, 15:6) This promise is crucial for modern-day believers as many around us are living with mounting debts and a pressurizing pace of life that deny them the peace to enjoy the fruit of their labor. Therefore, when believers live out the fear of God, His Word promises that they will have the fullness of life through the enjoyment of the fruit of their labor.

It is apparent that when one fears God, the divine blessing is also extended to the immediate family members as well. The fear of God has both individual and group effects on those who live it out on a daily basis.

Verse 3 elaborates that God's blessing will also be upon the spouse and the children of the one who fears God. In the ancient Middle East, the societal practice was patriarchal, and one of the important roles for women was to give birth to as many children as possible. Women's ability to give birth was equivalent to the badge of honor and social standing in the society. This verse states that the man who fears God will be blessed through the fruitful vine of his wife with many children and they will be like olive shoots. The significance of olive shoots is understood in the context of the Middle Eastern culture to mean longevity and fruitfulness

because olive trees can grow for hundreds of years as extremely resilient trees. When the children are referred to as olive shoots, it signifies the continuation of the father's fruitfulness and vitality from one generation to another. Therefore, the one who fears God will also experience posterity and the divine favor from one generation to the next.

Believers who desire to experience God's favor in both their lives today and the future of their children must live out the fear of God boldly without shame and excuse. The fear of God must be greater than the fear of the world before one can experience the divine effects of God's blessing in the various dimensions of life. Therefore, live out the fear of God boldly so that the divine blessings of Psalm 128 will follow after you in this generation to the next!



Rev Dr Wilson Teo is the President of TCA College in Singapore. He travels to different parts of the world to establish connections with institutions as well as minister at various platforms. Dr Teo also serves as an Executive Pastor on the Leadership Team of Trinity Christian Centre where he is strategically involved in the development and planning of the church. Known as a mentor of leaders, he is passionate about building strong churches and families, and raising leaders both in the ministry and marketplace.

## TRAINING

# The Wrath of God

*By Rev Gerald Tan, Calvary Assembly of God*

*What is the wrath of God? Why do we struggle to grasp this concept? Can a God of love also be the God of wrath? Let's take a journey with God as Rev Tan brings this subject to us.*

I am the Lord God Almighty. The whole universe was created by Me. The earth is Mine and its fullness thereof. But man is My greatest creation, for I have made them in My own image. I have given them so much. They were meant to be special, unique. They were to partake of My glory and fellowship with Me for all eternity.

But alas!

The greatest aspect of My creation has also turned out to be My greatest pain. You see, I have given man the freedom of choice. For I have realised that true worship is not that which is forced, but given. True relationship cannot be experienced in the absence of choice! So I have taken the greatest risk—to give man that ability to choose; creation to freely choose to worship their creator. Unfortunately, Lucifer, the fallen angel and his horde of demons have strongly influenced man to walk in disobedience.

The result has not only been the curse of sin upon man, but the destructive power of sin unleashed upon the earth. The nations rage in war. Sicknesses abound. Violence continues to ravage the earth. Natural calamities have brought so much pain into this world! The world has given in to its sinful cravings over and over, and humanity has lost all of its initial beauty and innocence.

What can I say of this world, of my creation? They have sinned against me. They have turned their hearts away from me and set their paths in wickedness. They have chosen to align with the enemy of their souls.

How can My holiness be mocked?  
How can My righteousness be scorned?  
How can My love be so utterly rejected?

I am a Holy God. And surely My wrath has been incurred. Sin cannot go unpunished, My law cannot be trespassed. Yet mankind has no regard for me. In ages past, I have wiped out the earth. I have destroyed My very creation. I have judged so severely, but it seems that they are unable to truly learn.

Maybe the key is in their Salvation. So I sent My Son to make atonement for their sins. To break the power of their disobedience and set them free. It was surely the darkest moment of My heart when I had to turn My face from My beloved Son as He hung on the cross. Yet they have not learnt!

How can My sacrifice be so despised?  
How can My grace be so abused?

Is humanity truly unable to learn and come back to Me? Does My wrath have to be poured out in full measure? Shall I contend with My creation forever? No! The time is coming when the fullness of My wrath will be poured out. Make no mistake of it.

But know this: My wrath is not a curse, except for the devil and those who choose his way. The devil and his minions have an eternal lake of fire awaiting them. It is their just destiny.

If people persist in their evil without repentance, know that there is no escape. They cannot hide behind their masks, or 'godly routines'. I see their hearts. I see their motivations.

But understand this, without wrath, My love and grace would not be fully comprehended. There is a price to pay, and I have paid it.

As much as there is wrath, My love is unrelenting, My grace unyielding.

### The Antinomy of Wrath

The wrath of God is an important doctrine that has, perhaps, never been fully understood by Christians or sufficiently addressed in the body of Christ. In light of God's love and grace, His wrath would be nothing short of an antinomy.

Here are some important principles we must understand about God's wrath.

#### 1. God wrath is just

God is just, and His wrath is justified. His wrath is not a reaction of anger, or an egotistical response to an unsubmitive subject. Instead, His wrath is the only right and holy response to a world of sin and immorality.

*"God's wrath in the Bible is never the capricious, self-indulgent, irritable, morally ignoble thing that human anger so often is. It is, instead, a right and necessary reaction to objective moral evil."* – J I Packer, *Knowing God*

It is also because of the wrath of God that we will truly see justice upon the earth. God **WILL** have the last say.

#### 2. Through God's wrath, we see His love

God's wrath does not leave mankind with a cruel God whose anger needs to be continually appeased by sacrifice and atonement. His wrath unleashes punishment that is deserving, but that is not the end. In the Old Testament, it was never how much sacrifice was made, but the need for atonement so that man could come

back into a right relationship with Him. In the New Testament, the fullness of God's salvation manifested when Jesus came to Earth to die on the cross for our sins. The perfect lamb became the ultimate sacrifice and atonement that we may fully embrace God's love and be restored in our relationship.

#### 3. Without wrath, God's grace would be cheap

Grace is the undeserving goodness of God poured out immeasurably and uncontainably to all His children. But without the context of His wrath, grace becomes merely the dishing out of goodwill and blessings. This makes God someone whom we try to win favor from and turn to whenever we need something. Yet, when we fully grasp the wrath of God, then we begin to see how awesome His grace is, how magnificent His heart for us, His children, truly is.

Let us understand the power of His wrath. Fearing God is not fearing His wrath. Knowing God requires us to know that our God is a jealous God, that His wrath is upon humanity, and as in the words of Jonathan Edwards, we are merely, "Sinners in the hand of an angry God". Only in this perspective can we truly reflect on the state of our relationship with Him, as well as to fully comprehend His love and grace.

*"Unless we grasp God's holiness, we will no longer be 'amazed' at His amazing grace."* – C S Lewis



Rev Gerald Tan is the Senior Pastor of Calvary Assembly of God (Singapore), and an executive committee member of The Assemblies of God of Singapore. A passionate preacher with an apostolic-prophetic anointing, he has a heartfelt desire to raise and release people to fulfill their God-given destinies. He actively ministers locally and globally, speaking into churches and leaders. Rev Gerald is married to Audrey, and they have two children, Davian and Evanny.



# The Holiness of God

*By Rev Alvin Ngo, Eternal Life Assembly*

*The holiness of God is a part of His character we often misunderstand. Rev Ngo teaches this hard truth.*

In almost every religion, there exists a distinction between what is holy and what is profane. A distinction that separates what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad, what is hallowed and what is reviled, and what is acceptable and what is not.

## Holiness Defined

To be “holy” is to “be distinct, separate, in a class by oneself”.

“The primary meaning of holy is ‘separate’. It comes from an ancient word that means ‘to cut’ or ‘to separate’. Perhaps even more accurate would be the phrase ‘a cut above something’. When we find a garment or another piece of merchandise that is outstanding, that has a superior excellence, we use the expression that it is ‘a cut above the rest’.”<sup>1</sup>

### 1. When we say God is holy, we are saying God is “separate” from us.

This is the first notion when the term “holiness” is applied to God. God is separate, set above all which is created.

“When the Bible calls God holy, it means primarily that He is transcendently separate. He is so far above and beyond us that He seems almost totally foreign to us.”<sup>2</sup>

In Exodus 15:11, Moses declares, “*Who among the gods is like you, LORD? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?*”

“*Among the gods there is none like you, Lord; no deeds can compare with yours. All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvellous deeds; you alone are God.*” (Psalms 86:8-10, 99:1-3; Isaiah 40:25; 57:15)

Theologian R C Sproul makes this insightful observation from Isaiah 6:1-3: “The Bible says that God is holy, holy, holy. Not that He is merely holy, or even holy, holy. He is holy, holy, holy. The Bible never says that God is love, love, love, or mercy, mercy, mercy, or wrath, wrath, wrath, or justice, justice, justice. It does say that He is holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is full of His glory.”<sup>3</sup>

### 2. When we say we are holy it means we are called to “be separated to God”.

“To be holy is to be ‘other’, to be different in a special way. The same basic meaning is used when the word holy is applied to earthly things.”<sup>4</sup>

Things are regarded holy because of their connection with God.

Like “*Holy ground*” (Exodus 3:5; Acts 7:33), “*Holy Sabbath*” (Exodus 16:23, 20:8; Nehemiah 9:14; Ezekiel 20:20), “*Holy day*” (Exodus 35:2; Nehemiah 10:31), “*Holy Place*” (Exodus 26:33; Joshua 24:26; 1 Kings 8:10) and “*Holy people*” (Exodus 22:31; Deuteronomy 7:6; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Jude 1:3).

In addition, we were given a command by God to “*Be holy because I am holy.*” This is found on eight separate occasions in Leviticus 11:44, 11:45, 16:16, 19:2, 20:7, 20:26, 21:8, and 21:23.

And 1 Peter 1:15-16 repeats what was found in Leviticus: “*But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: Be holy, because I am holy.*”

Because God is holy, we, who are His people are called to holiness. (Ephesians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3)

### 3. The holiness of God calls us to be set apart from the world

At the birth of the nation of Israel, God set His people apart from the rest of the world with a moral code (Exodus 20), sacrificial laws (Leviticus 1-7), a list of dietary laws (Leviticus 11, 17), and even a call to have holiness as a personal conduct (Leviticus 18-19).

The psalmist reminds us in chapter 24: “*Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in His holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.*”

“When things are made holy, when they are consecrated, they are set apart unto purity. They are to be used in a pure way. They are to reflect purity as well as simple apartness. Purity is not excluded from the idea of the holy; it is contained within it.”<sup>5</sup>

To be holy is to be morally pure.

In Ephesians 5:3 Paul reminds Christians: “*But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people.*”

The holiness of God is not simply a doctrine to which we give assent. Rather, it should govern our lives.

Holiness must influence our thinking, speech, deeds and lifestyle. It must impact our interests, pursuits and even recreation. So we need to embrace and exhibit a state of “separateness” from the world in terms of the way we think, speak, dress, behave, and live.

1 Peter 1:14-19 says: “*As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’ Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*”

The appropriate response to understanding the holiness of God is fear (reverence). And the working out of this fear is obedience. So if we really understand God’s holiness, we will live pure and obedient lives.

Probably the most important reason for holiness in our lives is found in Hebrew 12:14 which states that “*without holiness no one will see God.*”



Rev Alvin Ngo currently serves as the Deputy Senior Pastor and Missions Director of Eternal Life Assembly. He answered God’s call to full-time ministry in 1983. Spending the first two years in Pakistan with Operation Mobilisation, he has since been in the pastoral ministry for the past 35 years. He is a graduate of both Singapore Bible College and Trinity Theological College. His lovely wife of 33 years is Wai Leng and they have three children, Isaac, Ivan and Isabel.



## TOGETHERNESS - AG COMMUNITY

# Growing Leaders Through Gold

*By Royal Rangers Singapore*

*The process of raising up a leader for this generation.*

In a ceremony held on November 3, 2017, Royal Rangers (RR) Junior Commander Gabrielle Moi received the prestigious Gold National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA) from President Halimah Yacob and Mr Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Finance and Chairman of the NYAA Advisory Board.

Joining RR at six years old, Gabrielle could not have imagined that just 13 years later, she would be receiving the NYAA Gold. Her journey began at Bethel Assemblies of God (AG), Outpost #1, and was partially inspired by her elder sister, who received the same award in 2016. It was also the support of her family and the encouragement of many leaders that imparted godly values in her since a young age.

As a homeschooled youth, Gabrielle's parents saw the value of the RR program as an avenue to help



*Being involved in the community project of building learning shelters in Indonesia over 6 months*



*Gabrielle receiving the NYAA Gold Award from President Halimah Yacob and Minister Heng Swee Keat*

her interact with her peers, gain skills, as well as develop socially and spiritually.

One key skill that Gabrielle gained during her time in RR was leadership among her peers. Her ability and willingness to take up leadership positions gave her the opportunity to organize many homeschool learning conferences. She saw how these skills, coupled with her meaningful RR experiences, would equip her to survive in our globalized world and make the right decisions in her life for Christ.

Today, Gabrielle holds the words of her father close to her heart: "Change the way you see things, and everything around you will change." Leadership to Gabrielle is all about having the right perspectives. This has influenced how she sees the potential of every child she mentors as a Junior Leader in weekly RR meetings. Just as she had received good guidance from her leaders, she hopes to inspire others in the same way.



*Mentoring younger leaders in the weekly RR meetings*



### JOIN US!

Achievement is the hallmark experience of the Royal Rangers (RR) Program for youths. RR Singapore is an operating authority of the National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA). Through the weekly programs, adventure and leadership camps, service and outreach opportunities, youths have the opportunity to work on the NYAA—Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. In addition, youths develop mentoring relationships with Christ-centered leaders that impart godly values and Kingdom perspectives to become servant leaders for Christ.

We welcome children and youths of ages 5 to 17 to join us!

Visit [www.royalrangers.org.sg](http://www.royalrangers.org.sg) for more information or email us at [info@royalrangers.org.sg](mailto:info@royalrangers.org.sg)



*Attending one of the RR Youth Leadership camps*





**5-7**

YEARS OLD

Ranger Kids is an exciting program for young children. They can experience fun and adventure.



**8-10**

YEARS OLD

Discovery Rangers features an engaging system of learning through various outdoor and indoor activities.



**11-14**

YEARS OLD

Adventure Rangers gets youths participating in activities involving outdoor camps, arts, technology and sports.



**15-17**

YEARS OLD

Expedition Rangers mentors youths to develop self-reliance, leadership and a deeper appreciation of God.

**Bring your children to Royal Rangers and watch them grow up holistically—Physically, Mentally, Socially and Spiritually. Find a church near you with the Weekly Royal Rangers Program.**

Get more information at [www.royalrangers.org.sg](http://www.royalrangers.org.sg) Follow us on [facebook.com/Royal.Rangers.Singapore](https://facebook.com/Royal.Rangers.Singapore)



## TOGETHERNESS - AG COMMUNITY

# Celebrating God's Faithfulness at ACTS College's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner

*By Rev Kwek Sew Kian, ACTS College*

*Photo credit: ACTS College*

*Looking back on our journey and giving thanks to God for His faithfulness.*

In 1977, the Bible College started with four full-time students.

40 years later, the College has graduated more than 400 students, a majority of whom are serving actively in the church and marketplace.

On this celebratory note, ACTS College's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner was filled with an atmosphere of gratitude. Held at Hilltop Garden Restaurant (Bukit Batok) on November 2, 2017, we were very excited to welcome 40 tables of participants. The happy occasion was graced by the Assemblies of God Executive Committee, the College's Board of Directors, leaders of Bible colleges, church pastors and leaders, our alumni, students, and of course, their families and friends.

One of the highlights of the night was the video montage of how the Bible College has evolved over the last four decades, bringing back fond memories for many. Rev Robert Lum, Chairman of the Board, thanked the College for training hundreds of leaders, then and now, to serve effectively in their sphere of influence. Indeed, by the grace and power of God, the College has come a long way from its humble beginnings.

And to the many supporters who have helped the College along its journey—A big thank you! We would also like to thank our generous sponsors who contributed to the goodie bags, table gifts and the evening's Blessed Draw prizes. Finally, we also applauded the organizing committee for their creativity, hard work and sacrifice in organizing this unforgettable dinner.

Indeed, all of us had a great time connecting with one another and getting to know ACTS College better. We look forward to seeing you again on our 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary and many more to come by the grace of God. To Him be all the glory!



*Getting ready to welcome our guests*



*Cake-cutting by the AG EXCO, ACTS College Board of Directors and President*



*The organizing committee*



*Giving thanks to the Lord with one voice*



*Capturing memories at the photo booth*



# ACTS College 39<sup>th</sup> Graduation Exercise

*By Jenny Tan Siok Leng, ACTS College*

*Photo credit: ACTS College*

*We celebrated another milestone of our graduates' lives.*

On the beautiful afternoon of November 12, 2017, there was a palpable excitement in the air at Emmanuel Assembly of God (AG). When the ceremonial march-in music began, a hush fell over the main sanctuary. And so began the 39<sup>th</sup> Graduation of ACTS College. 24 graduands were presented their respective academic certificates, diplomas and degrees, and 15 ACTS-School of Supernatural Ministry (A-SSM) participants received their certificates of attendance for the program.



*Rev Mark Poh's exhortation to the graduates*

Steering from the norm of a somber and serious ceremony, this year's graduation was one charged with energy and enthusiasm as family and friends turned up in throngs to support and witness this momentous event. Throughout the entire ceremony, there was much laughter and joy, as well as a strong sense of togetherness among the pastors, teachers, graduands, and guests.

Camaraderie was also seen among the graduating students, testifying to the friendships and bonds that had grown among them. It is not surprising, then, that the Student Response this year included an unexpected performance by the entire ACTS College graduating class that had the whole house singing and clapping along with them.

The 39<sup>th</sup> ACTS Graduation marked a truly extraordinary day for all present.

Congratulations, once again, to all graduates of ACTS College and participants of A-SSM. This is not the end but merely the beginning of another adventure with God. Congratulations also to the President's Award recipient, Aggie Chan Chui Har (Faith AG) and Best Academic Award recipient, Jenny Tan Siok Leng (Emmanuel AG).

To God be all the glory and honor.



*ACTS College Family*



*Graduates singing 'I Will Follow Him'*



*Best Academic Award Recipient, Jenny Tan*



*Prayer of consecration by pastors and leaders*



*Sharing the joy with family and friends*



## TOGETHERNESS - AG COMMUNITY

# A Praise Report from ElimParis

*By Rev John Lim, ElimParis*

Dear friends,

With the year of 2017 coming to an end soon, we are looking forward to connecting together as a church to usher in the coming year. We thank God for an eventful year that has passed. Here are some photos highlighting some memorable events.



*In the Town Hall for the address*

Rebecca and I were invited to Emile Roux Hospital to exhibit panels showcasing the Protestant Reformation that took place in Europe throughout the 16th century. We were given the opportunity to take all the hospital patients through the events that led renoun German professor and theologian Martin Luther to publish the Ninety-Five Theses in 1517, which disputed the corrupt teachings of the Catholic Church at that time. This then paved the way for the Protestant Reformation to take place.

I was invited to the Paris town hall meeting held in September. There were addresses by the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, as well as French President Emmanuel Macron. Mayor Hidalgo and President Macron expressed their thanks to Protestants in France for their dedication and upright moral values that has benefited the country as well as Europe. What a privilege to be able to shine for Him before our country's leaders!



*Singapore National Day Celebration in France*

We were invited by the Singapore Embassy to celebrate Singapore's National Day in September together with all other Singaporeans in France. What a joy to be able to connect with our dear friends residing in France during Singapore's birthday festivities!



*Chris and family*

We would like to thank God for the addition of the Goh family into the ElimParis family. It is a joy to see how God was able to speak to Chris and Sherreen, as well as open up doors for them to leave Singapore to work in France. Please do pray for them to overcome the language and cultural barriers here in Paris.

Chris' father was diagnosed with a serious illness just before they came to France. This caused the move to be delayed. Thankfully, his father's condition improved quite quickly. It was a miracle. His boss in Paris was also willing to save his job vacancy for him while he cared for his father. Amen to that!



*Ministry of Pastor Liew and his team*

Pastor David Liew and his team of missionaries came from Kuala Lumpur to visit us in the early part of October. They spent their days sowing seeds of faith on the streets and invited people for our events on Elim Sunday! The team also spent time visiting



*During the Revival Conferences*

church members and allowed God to use them as vessels of encouragement and blessings!

The month of November allowed us to come together with all other Chinese and French churches in Europe at the Revival Conferences. We thank God for this opportunity to grow in unity and strength together with other churches in Europe!



*Rebecca and I at the University of Strasbourg*

September marked a new beginning for Rebecca taking up studies with the University of Strasbourg on counseling and chaplaincy.

As we labor in France, we need your prayers. Please pray:

- For God to open up a door to start a Protestant Social Center in the town of Ivry-sur-Seine, next to Paris. This is thanks to a purchase of a suitable building in the town!
- For God's strength and help to be upon the lives of Rebecca and me. So that we can continue to serve God in Paris among the French, Mandarin and English speakers, and for God's wisdom and strength to be on the church board and leadership.
- For God's continued touch to be upon ElimParis to be a multi-cultural family without borders and to guide us in His mission to touch people and make disciples for Jesus in France.
- For God's help and guidance for my ministry to foreigners in hospitals, as well as my continued ministry in the French prisons.
- For God's provision to purchase a ministry vehicle—having 300km to cover between church, hospital and prison work every week.
- For God's provision for the needs of the refugees in Paris, France. More volunteers to be raised up to serve the population with the love of Jesus.
- For God's provision of funds to enable more services to be provided for refugee families: French classes and a children's program.

In His labor,  
Rev John Lim  
<https://johnlimkc.wordpress.com/>

*Photo credit: Rev John Lim*



# Morning Prayer 2017

By King Rachel, Trinity Christian Centre

*Starting the day right, starting the day with God.*

Getting out of bed for work or school can be a daily struggle for most of us.

What about getting up even earlier to meet God?

From November 13 to 17, many Trinitarians got up earlier than usual to meet with God at 'Morning Prayer'.

Though it's been a while since I had gotten up at 5.30am daily, I had always looked forward to *Morning Prayer* since my first one during the GCE A-level examinations. Each experience rewarded me with a wonderful, refreshing time of basking in the Lord's presence—worshipping, reflecting, responding, and praying together with other believers.

This year, the struggle to come for *Morning Prayer* seemed greater than in the years past. Since shifting from Bishan to Yishun, my travel time was immediately increased. The big storm on Tuesday morning didn't help. With train faults on Wednesday, the commute was made even longer. Frustrated, I found myself asking God why there were so many obstacles this year.

Despite the weather and delayed trains, Theatre 2 at Trinity was getting fuller each day. Individuals, couples, IGNYTERS, campus students, and carecells came. Even parents were bringing their children along to engage with the Lord! Some drove while others arranged for and prayed desperately for cabs. The efforts of many who came really encouraged me, especially when God provided ways for Trinitarians to come for *Morning Prayer* on time.



*Agreeing together for God's agenda*



*Soaking in the presence of God*



*A time of worship in God's presence*



*Hearing His voice from heaven*

"We always look forward to *Morning Prayer*. Despite transportation being a challenge in the early hours of the day, my wife and I will make it a priority. This week, we received God's promise for 2018. He also revealed areas to surrender to Him as He assured us of His promises over our lives."

— **Mawesh** (IT executive) and **Viji** (homemaker)

"Coming for all five days was a challenge as I still had to make it on time to work. I almost gave up on Wednesday but I'm glad I pressed on. I received a fresh revelation of the covenantal confidence that is founded upon my relationship with God. As I allow Him to shape my heart, I resolved to be more diligent in my Time Alone with God."

— **Jackie Ho** (regional sales director)

"As a member of the National Service Force, days outside of the army are precious for sleep-ins. When I took time to be at *Morning Prayer* this week, God spoke to me about spiritual disciplines: When we make it a habit to seek His will and His Word every day, He will make amazing breakthroughs happen for us!"

— **Timothy Leong** (National Service Force)

"This was my first time coming for *Morning Prayer*. I struggled because it was so early but I have been greatly impacted by the time of worship and prayer. Instead of feeling tired, I felt refreshed. God has changed my perspective of *Morning Prayer*."

— **Cheryl Wee** (student)

"I took leave this week to attend all five days of *Morning Prayer*. I thank God that I could seek Him through this time. I have been blessed by the Word from Psalm 27 and confident that God has good plans for my family and carecell in 2018."

— **Chong Yu Wen** (accountant)

"I was delighted not to be on morning shift this week because I could come for *Morning Prayer*. I am so thankful and grateful to God for the Word and His assurance that I can come to Him in confidence. On Friday, God gave me a vision for 2018. It is beautiful being able to hold on to His promises."

— **Roxanne Jomento** (staff nurse)

"Traveling from the West was a struggle and I had class after *Morning Prayer*. But the time has impacted and reminded me what it means to still my heart and commit to dwelling in His presence. Indeed, starting the day with God is the best way to start each day."

— **Elijah Tan** (student)

Persevering through *Morning Prayer* was tough. After the first two mornings, I didn't feel as refreshed as I used to. The breakthrough came on Wednesday with the message on confidence. In that time, God uncovered some barriers in my relationship with Him. When He challenged me to re-read Psalm 27 in my own time, He rewarded my perseverance and gave me clarity and revelation on the following Monday.

The impact of *Morning Prayer* doesn't just stay within those five days. My prayer is that we will continue to learn how to discipline ourselves each day to start our day with seeking God.



*Coming together as a family to seek God*



## TOGETHERNESS - AG CHURCHES

# Shekinah AG 27<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: A New Beginning

By Jae Ernyl Lin, Shekinah AG

Shekinah Assembly of God (AG) Church's 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration was not only a time of thanksgiving, but also a time of new beginnings.

*"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; Do you not perceive it?"*

These words were echoed by our Senior Pastor, Rev Tan Hock Cheng, quoting from Isaiah 43:18-19. It was the main message of our 27<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary Celebration held at Park Hotel Alexandra on October 1, 2017.

Sister Serene and her team led us in a time of praise and worship that brought us all to a place of awe and expectancy of good things to come. In about 11 months, we will be worshipping God in this very hall in September 2018. We are all looking forward to our new beginning!



An amazing time of worship

Following the wonderful time of worship, husband-and-wife team Sister Jae and Brother Winston sang a rendition of Laura Story's 'Blessings'. The Children's Ministry also put up an adorable dance performance, which brought much joy to many in the audience. In between these two items, we were all ears to the powerful testimony by Sister Stephanie whose life's struggles and victories



Our children ministry's dance item

reminded me of Paul's unyielding statement in 2 Corinthians 12:9: *"My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness."*

Soon after, to the delight of many, our celebrity guest speaker, Ms Belinda Lee went onstage, not to host the show, but to share with us about God and her journey of new beginnings. She began with a heart-wrenching recollection of her childhood and an open confession of her great lack of self-esteem, which she carried with her all the way into her early years in showbiz. She admitted, "I was a people-pleaser."

Although the celebrity lifestyle seemed glamorous, she had her fair share of struggles, even as a Christian then. In the deepest of her valleys and after seemingly endless prayers, God came knocking on her door. There was a call from a producer. That day, she made an audacious plea to God to bless her in the new television travelogue, 'Find me a Singaporean'. And she was blessed! She had finally gotten her big break.

*Find Me A Singaporean* brought hope to so many viewers and the response was overwhelming. Eventually, she felt led by God to write a book entitled, 'Larger Than Life'—a meaningful showcase of truly inspirational people she met during her travels for the program. At that point, God was clearly at work in her career and she found that she no longer had to please man. By simply being herself, she soon desired to please the Lord alone.

At the peak of her career, she made a radical move in obedience to God's calling. She took a period of no-pay leave to pursue Bible School. As she took that leap of faith, God threw open the floodgates of heaven and poured blessings upon her life! She bagged three awards at the Star Awards and received one ultimate reward. It was the joy of seeing her own mother receive Christ into her life! This was the greatest miracle in Belinda's life.

With her mother's incredible faith story and the unraveling of God's purpose in her own life, she took comfort in Psalm 56:8. It says:

*"You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book."*

Belinda and her mother both knew that God alone is *"the one who could carry [them] and walk [them] out of the shadow of death..."* The story of Ms Belinda Lee can be your story too!

Photo credit: Khor Tuck Kuan



(L-R) Rev Hock Cheng, Ms Lee and Sister Camelia

During the altar call that followed, Rev Hock Cheng admonished us to stop dwelling on the past and to make our new beginning with Christ. There were many hands raised that morning.

May their hearts grow to seek the Lord, the Maker of new beginnings.

*"There are [a few] firsts in this anniversary celebration that we thank God for. For example, this is the first time our anniversary became an evangelistic event."* – Alvin Goh

*"God came through and honored the ones who stepped out of their comfort zone to invite others and the venue was pretty much packed. Some even had to stand!"* – Priscilla Tan Le En

*"I saw my colleague crying when '全新的你' was sung during worship. Though she did not receive Christ today, we believe the seed has been planted and we will continue to reach out to her. Praise God!"* – Elvin Choo

*"I am particularly touched by Belinda's sharing. God has since changed Belinda's life (and mine) and she is now living for an audience of One—Yahweh. I am also deeply moved by her mother's complete dependence on God despite her cancer. Both are women of great faith. Like mother, like daughter!"* – Camelia Ang



(L-R) Ms Lee, Trina and Stephanie



# The Power of God to Transform

*By Stephanie Koo, Shekinah Assembly of God*

*How God transformed me, a former drug addict.*

My name is Stephanie. I am a proud mother of three wonderful kids namely Trina, August and Trinity. I feel very excited to share with you my encounter with God.

I guess to many people in church I look like a very normal person. Maybe just a bit short-tempered. But most people still don't know of my old life—how bad or wretched I was. I used to be a hardcore addict. I was addicted to smoking, alcohol and drugs.

I came from a broken family. I started smoking at the age of 12 and my addiction grew from bad to worse after I left school at 17. During my schooling days, it was very difficult to get cigarettes, as I was not of the legal age to buy them. My highest record was smoking four packs of cigarettes a day. This was my daily routine. It was also then that Hokkien became my “first language”.

My addiction to alcohol began after I started working. Almost every day without fail, I would go for drinks at pubs and discos and end up very drunk on many occasions. At the same time, I also came in contact with drugs. First, it was ecstasy. Then, I “upgraded” to cocaine, marijuana and ICE. Initially, it was for fun, but gradually I became a hardcore addict.

In those days when I was taking ICE, I would

lock myself in a room for 48 hours! Over time, my addiction became very bad. I was too young and naive to comprehend the consequences of my actions. However, thanks to God, my life started to change when I became pregnant with my first child, Trina.

During the pregnancy, my desire for drugs, alcohol and cigarettes somehow vanished! I did not crave for those things at all. At first I thought, “Wow, my willpower is strong.” I thought that I could give all my addictions up just like that, and that I was freed entirely on my own effort. But after seeing many people around me trying and failing to get out of their addictions, I started sensing that this was something more than just willpower.

One day, I heard some testimonies from former drug addicts at Breakthrough Missions, a Christian Halfway House, which made me realize that my victory over the addictions was not my willpower at all. It was God who rescued me. In His grace and mercy, He had made it easy for me. My grandparents had brought me to church since I was seven, but I later backslided. Even though I had strayed so far away, God never forgot me.

Now looking back, I can testify to you that it is God who watched over me throughout the years, despite my past sins.

Today, God has given me a new beginning. Last year, through my friend Alice's invitation, I visited

*Photo credit: Stephanie Koo*



her church, Shekinah AG, at Queensway Shopping Centre. Today, all three of my lovely kids also attend Shekinah AG. Trina, my eldest, just got water baptized this year.

Through it all, God has taught me one lesson: Miracles do happen if you believe in Him.

Let me end with my favorite verse from the Bible in Psalm 37:5: “Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you.” (NLT)

*...Continued from pg 4*

The apostle Paul, who received his ministry because of God's mercy (1 Corinthians 7:25; 2 Corinthians 4:1; 1 Timothy 1:13, 16), became the instrument of the decisive revelation. What Moses first saw, and David fell on, and Jeremiah wept for, Paul saw on the other side of Christ, and he marveled. In all the Bible, Paul gives us the clearest vantage into, as Romans 9:16 says, the God “who has mercy”—literally, the mercy-having God. In other words, God's mercy expresses his heart, as Paul will show, in a way that the demonstration of his wrath and the display of his power do not.

Romans 9:22–23 gives us the deepest glimpse into God's heart, and what we find at bottom is mercy. This is perhaps as deep as the Bible goes in explaining to us why God governs his creation as he does. Paul puts it in the form of a question, not because he's unsure of the truth, but for rhetorical effect, because it is awesome and sobering to contemplate.

*What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to*

*make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory?*

**“Our God is not just powerful. He is not simply a God of uncompromising justice. He is the mercy-having God.”**



Make no mistake, God does make known his omnipotence. And he does show his righteous wrath. He is holy. To not demonstrate wrath in a world of sin and rebellion against him would be untrue to himself and unloving to his people. God is phenomenally powerful, beyond our human capacity to comprehend it. And such an almighty God does indeed show wrath at the trampling of his glory and the harming of his people. But wrath is not his heart. Severity in God always serves his heart of mercy—to make known the riches of his glory to his people, who are the vessels of his mercy.

## **Entrust Yourself to Mercy**

Our God is not simply sovereign, wonderful as

it is to celebrate. And he is not only a God of uncompromising justice, thankful as we are that he is. He is the mercy-having God who invites us to look not only at his awesome authority and sovereign strength, but to set our eyes on his mercy and see into his very heart.

Entrust yourself to the God who has mercy.

David Mathis (@davidcmathis) is executive editor for [desiringGod.org](http://desiringGod.org) and pastor at Cities Church in Minneapolis. He is a husband, father of four, and author of *Habits of Grace: Enjoying Jesus through the Spiritual Disciplines*.

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## TRANSFORMATION

# Thirteen Years of Waiting

*By Pastor Grace Samuel, Smyrna AG*

*God's timing was perfect for me.*

Last September, we just celebrated our daughter's first birthday. But it took 13 years for her to arrive so that I could carry her in my arms. It was a long wait. But God made everything so beautiful in His time. This is the story of how God had pruned me while I waited for my firstborn.

At the age of 21, I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior. At 22, I got water baptized and at 23, I answered God's call for ministry. Immediately after committing to God's call, He led me into marriage. At 23, I got married to my husband, Pastor Samuel Gift Stephen. The marriage was fast and furious. We had decided to get married a month after we met. God led us beautifully, meeting all the needs of the wedding as we agreed to His plan by faith. We were totally clueless about our future, but we knew that God was leading us. We just followed His direction by faith.

Immediately after the marriage, God had started to prune us, especially me. I thought I was going to start a family just like any other couple. But there was a delay. God was training me for His work. At that time, my prayer life was so dependent on my husband, expecting prophecies from him daily. I was lazy, refusing to sharpen my own spiritual gifts by spending time with God.

Then, we started to have disagreements and misunderstandings in our marriage. And I had no choice but to turn to God for solution and peace. That's when my molding began. I started to spend more time in prayer, seeking God for His will. As I spent more time in fasting and prayer, I began to sharpen my hearing of God's voice and sought His will on my own. God started to speak to me regarding my calling and about the church. He was training me to become a teacher of the Word and a pastor.

In 2008, when my father-in-law, the late Rev Dr John Sam Stephen had passed away, God brought me into full-time ministry. We didn't have many people then, and the church was heavily in debt. Both my husband and I were the only leaders in the church. There was a huge doubt in everyone's mind if we could run this church. But God led us amazingly.



*Pastor Samuel and Pastor Grace with Emmanuella*

Every spiritual program and activity of the church was an inspiration from Him. He also led me to Bible college to be trained theologically, which enabled me to train and groom our own leaders in the church. Eventually, I started to preach as well. At that time, God was leading my husband into his apostolic calling. He also gave him wisdom to settle the debts of the church without depending on the members. Over the years, the church grew and multiplied into various services and fellowships.

Although the church was prospering, the pain of barrenness was killing me. Whenever I had prayed for the child, God made me wait. There was silence from Him. Once, He even made me stop praying for the child and focus on the ministry. It was so painful to be barren and serve in the ministry.

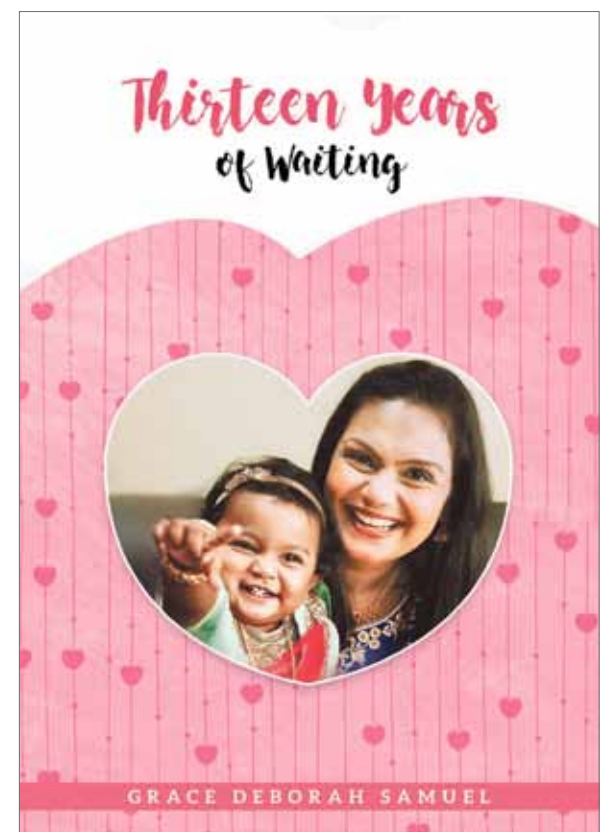
Many people passed their judgement upon me indirectly. Some people thought that I was a sinner punished by God and even doubted my ministry and calling. My family condemned us for not trying hard enough for the child because we were always so busy in the ministry. No one knew that God was pruning us. But I strongly believed in His promises.

Finally, in the year 2015, God allowed me to conceive my little princess Emmanuella. It is amazing when I look back at the way He prepared me to conceive her. Indeed, God does make everything beautiful in His timing.

Today, I feel so thankful for this long wait because over the years, God had groomed me into a pastor, teacher, leader, trainer, translator, interpreter, prayer warrior, and recently even an author. Just two months ago, God made me publish a book of my 13 years of waiting in Him to encourage others in their faith journey.

This book was impressed upon me during a 40-day fast and was produced in less than 30 days. It was a great miracle and something that I would never have imagined. Truly, I see 1 Corinthians 2:9 becoming so real in my life.

Now, I fully understand that waiting upon the Lord will always result in us getting the best. His plans will never go wrong and when we surrender to His will, we will experience great joy. To God be the Glory!



*Photo credit: Pastor Grace Samuel*



# God's Amazing Grace Turned Me Around

*By Irene Antonio, The Living Word Fellowship*

*When I was deep in sin, I met Christ who turned me around for good.*

For almost 30 years I was in bondage. I was just 16 when I started my bad habits of smoking and drinking. At 23, I got married but failed. Out of pride, I tried to take on all the responsibilities at home. However, since my salary was no longer enough to meet our needs, I started to commit sexual sin. In 1996, I worked in a club to earn more and within a span of four months I had an abortion twice. Since then I began living in the shadow of fear. Finding a decent job was not enough. I was longing for something I did not know.

In 2013, I came to Singapore to work. It was here that my loneliness started to go deeper. I would feel so sad every time I went home on my off days. My bad habits no longer satisfied me. I was searching for something more that I could not explain.

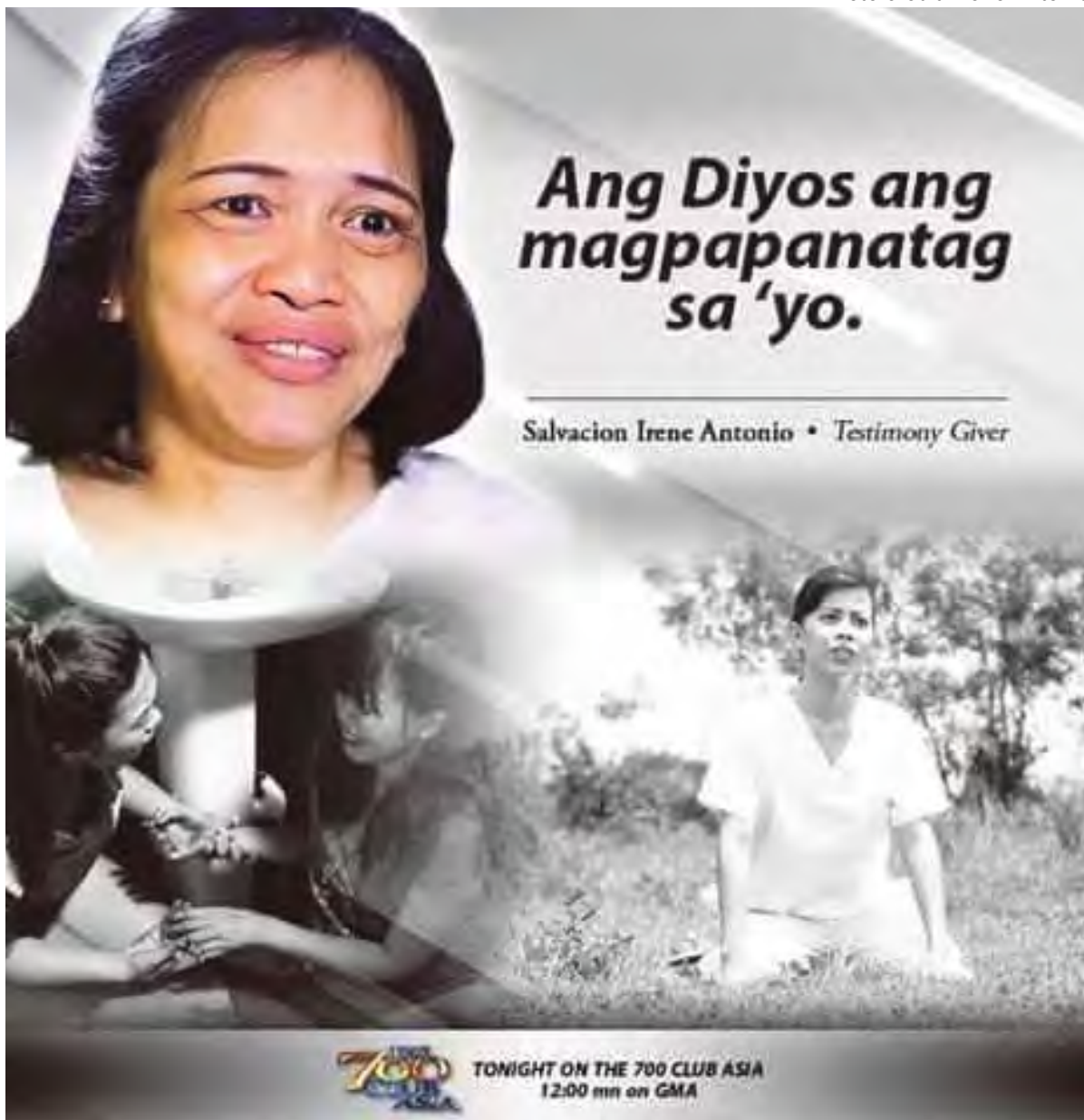
About a year after, a friend invited me to a fellowship to celebrate her birthday, and to introduce her Savior to me. I accepted her invitation just for a change of venue and crowd. That Sunday I had a sense of excitement to go. The pastor embraced me and I felt something then, but ignored it as I assumed I was only missing my mother. However, the moment the pastor prayed for me, my tears started to flow. I felt so secure and protected as if something inside of me had been released, but I did not understand what that meant.

One thing I was sure of was that there was joy in my heart and my fears seemed to have disappeared. I did not have a Bible, so I asked my daughter in the Philippines to send me her small New Testament Bible. My days off became more meaningful. I felt excited attending those Sunday gatherings. My deep sense of longing began to lessen each time I went there. There was this satisfaction in me that I had never experienced before. I got involved with the worship team even though I did not use to sing. I helped out in preparations for activities. As I started to know God more, my life started getting in order.



*Irene (front in white top) with her friends partying before she was converted*

*Photo credit: Irene Antonio*



*Irene's story was featured on The 700 Club Asia GMA, a Christian Broadcasting company, on September 25, 2017*

Three months into this newfound experience, Jesus removed my smoking and drinking habits. Not long after, He also released me from being an adulterer. I began to enjoy my new life with my Jesus and I began to desire more of Him.

On May 25, 2015, I attended The Living Word Fellowship's Women's Encounter Retreat. Even from the start of the session my tears kept flowing. Again, I could not explain why, but I felt so much joy inside of me. That day, on the last session called "Immersed in His Spirit", I just laid down every stronghold at God's feet, asked for His forgiveness and mercy, and hoped for new things to come.

That day, I cried out loud like a small child and all I could say clearly was, "Thank you, Lord!" I realized that all my life, no one truly loved me as much as Jesus did. When I finally opened my eyes, I felt like a brand new person! He embraced me with His loving arms and made me whole. He did not only forgive and cleanse me from all my unrighteousness, but also gave me the gift of His Holy Spirit.

My life's worth is now placed in living for my Savior and proclaiming His goodness to the world. My shame is gone and I am no longer the same person that I used to be. This is all because of Jesus!



## TRANSFORMATION

# The Journey to Gold – Embracing Life with a Special Need

By Kristine Lee, Trinity Christian Centre

*How family and faith enabled Danielle Moi achieve her dreams.*

“I’m going for gold. I’m going for God all the way...”

Those lyrics ran through Danielle’s mind as she stepped on the podium to receive her first-ever gold medal in the ASEAN Para Games this year. A dream come true; what’s amazing is the unsung story behind her win. When she was nine years old, Danielle was diagnosed with dyspraxia, a lifelong condition that would affect her learning abilities and sense of distance.

How is it possible for someone with a learning challenge and distance-sensing difficulties to win gold medals in swimming? Danielle’s family played a big part in her gold-medal performance. Growing up, swimming time was always family time. That pastime eventually became a passion that her family nurtured and supported.

Her mother, Suzi and father, Max would take turns to drive her for practice sessions twice a week at 5.30am. Every night, they would take her back from evening practices that sometimes went beyond 9pm. Her elder sisters, Abigail and Gabrielle would regularly pack dinner for her, so that she could eat on the way home. Her older brother, Nathaniel, availed himself to be a listening ear.

Even with such strong family support, there were some things that Danielle had to learn on her own. “It’s like a baby learning to walk,” she shares. “Every one falls in life.” Tenacity in the Lord also saw Danielle through tough times. “You trust Me, I trust you,” is what God tells her when she faces difficulties in the midst of her special needs.

### Embracing a new normal

It took time for the Moi family to embrace a new normal, adjusting life to accommodate Danielle’s special needs. Max comically recalled his shock when Danielle, standing right next to his ear, would suddenly start talking loudly. Suzi remembered how a four-year-old Danielle suddenly disappeared halfway during her first swimming competition because she became tired and went to the playground instead. In another instance, Danielle accidentally locked herself in the bathroom during an ongoing competition. While it was funny at first, it became less comical when these incidents kept occurring.



*The golden win*

Gabrielle remembered how the siblings thought Danielle was deliberately being difficult. It wasn’t until they learned about her dyspraxia that they understood that she had learning limitations.

Despite the diagnosis, Suzi chose to focus on God’s affirmation. “Danielle is my gift to you,” she remembered God telling her during the pregnancy. She was conceived even after undergoing tubal ligation—a procedure which was supposed to make Suzi unable to conceive. “Every one of my children has needs,” Suzi shared, “Danielle’s are just louder.”

Growing up, Danielle’s parents would affectionately call her “Precious”. She often took that to mean she was special in a negative way. “Since I am so stupid, so dumb, what’s going to happen to me when I grow up?” she often asked herself.

It was only after enrolling in a special education school that she understood what it meant to live with dyspraxia. She wasn’t stupid or dumb. She just needed to learn things in a slower and more structured pace. With wisdom beyond her 17 years,

she shared that, “You can be good but some people are always going to be better. That doesn’t mean you have to be good at everything.”

Through messages shared in IGNYTE, Trinity’s youth ministry, she has learned that life is not perfect. “Life is like a roller coaster, not everything is straight.”

### Overcoming obstacles by depending on God

Before every competition, Danielle enters a time of prayer, drawing peace and strength from the Lord. Through *Time Alone With God*, she reminds herself daily to depend on Him. “God is also our best friend. Even when we push Him away, His arms are wide open. We can trust in Him to do our best and He is proud when we give our best.”

There’s always a song for her Heavenly Father in Danielle’s heart. She sings out loud or in her heart, telling God how good He is and that she is actively listening for Him. In her songs, she can feel His presence. His love is just there whispering, “I love you, My daughter. No matter what, I will always be there for you.”

*Photo credit: Trinity Christian Centre*



# From Daydreaming to Visioning

By Tan Han Lay, Teen Challenge Singapore

*God restored my relationship with Him and my family.*

I grew up without my mother. She passed away when I was just six years old. My father raised me up along with three other siblings. Without parental guidance, I soon got into trouble with the law. From a young age of 12 all the way till I was 39, I had served time in the Singapore Boys' Home and Changi Prison for various drug offences, namely possession, consumption and trafficking.

While in prison, my father visited me regularly, at least once a month. I lost my brother while I was incarcerated. The remaining sisters would have nothing to do with me. I had never experienced much freedom or family life outside the prison walls. There was no home to go to. Home was anywhere I could find a shelter for the night.

During the last prison sentence, I was directed to Teen Challenge (TC) DARE Centre for a six-month program. It was March 2010 and I completed the program successfully around late October.

After the residential program at TC, I decided to return home to my family. My father accepted me. But for the next two years, my sisters were extremely wary of me. They were always wondering what I would be up to next. Unknown to my family, my transformational journey had begun while in TC. In those six months of residency, I developed discipline and acquired a positive attitude toward work and life.

I started attending and worshipping at Church of Singapore (COS), Marine Parade. Under the sponsorship of COS, I enrolled myself into AGBC (now ACTS College) from 2012 to 2014 while I found a job as a cleaner. I also volunteered in church during my spare time.



*My wife and I*

I got to know my wife Helen while worshipping at COS. We were married on Christmas Day of 2012. I was glad that my entire family attended the wedding and I felt very blessed. My sisters began to open up to me as they witnessed the change in my life and behavior.



*With TC Volunteers at a Prison Appreciation event*

After a period of scrutiny for three years, my sisters approached me and included me in their family gatherings. The breakthrough came in 2014 when they invited both me and my wife for dinner.

Things began to look very promising for me at the workplace. I am a diligent worker. As a result, I received a promotion every six months. From a general cleaner, I was promoted to become a supervisor. Later, a manager, and subsequently, the operations manager. All this happened between 2012 to 2015.

At the peak of my career, I tendered my resignation. I had a dream. I dreamt of starting my own cleaning business. I had acquired all the necessary skills and knowledge while on the job. I attended night classes to upgrade myself.

In October 2015, I started my own company. As expected, I faced many challenging issues, not just my delinquent past. I had to do everything from securing the cleaning contracts to the recruitment of workers, the documentation as well as to provide all the necessary support. It was completely a one-man operation. Only by sheer determination, I turned my disadvantages to advantages. More contracts began to stream in and the business began to move along.

Currently, I have more than 80 workers under my employment and 30% of them were ex-offenders. My desire is to engage ex-offenders and offer them second chances by providing employment opportunities for them.

I volunteered as a Counsellor to inmates in prison weekly through TC's Pastoral Care and Outreach. I wanted to give back to society what I had graciously received from others along the way. I am thankful to God for touching my life.

On November 4, 2017, I was presented with the Certificate of Merit Achievement, Bronze Award at the annual "Yellow Ribbon Celebrating Second Chances Awards Ceremony" from Mr Amrin Amin, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health.

This Bronze Award is given for outstanding ex-offenders who have remained free from crime and drugs for a period of five years and have stood out in our efforts to upgrade themselves. Award winners should also have had significant involvement in offender rehabilitation and community work in the last one year.

I am very glad that my father did not give up on me during my years of imprisonment. My father became a Christian in 2012 and was baptized in COS. God restored my relationship with my sisters, and I am appreciative of my wife for her acceptance and trust.

Our God is a God of second chances.



*At a TC event*



## TRANSFORMATION

# God the Transformer

By Coco Choo, Emmanuel Assembly of God

*For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of His beloved Son. (Colossians 1:13)*

For over 20 years, I had thrived in my life by being hardworking and enslaved myself to the things of this world. I balanced my career and household well, and prided myself as a “superwoman”. True to the fallen nature of man, my sins grew so large that I could not see myself. I became headstrong, proud, greedy, cynical, critical, quick to anger and unforgiving.

Until 2013, I did not believe in any god but only in myself. I believed I was independent and responsible for my own salvation, even though I had been through a Catholic secondary school and was introduced to church in 2010.

From 2013 to 2016, my sins escalated to point where it caused me to be isolated from my loved ones. I had made a folly in some personal investments and became a victim to a few scams. I sought to recover my finances by fighting these cheats in court. All these trials brought me further woes. Then, my headstrong nature finally caved in and I sank into depression.

At the invitation of a friend, I attended the Alpha course held at Emmanuel Assembly of God in August 2016. Something began to stir in my heart, but my mind remained unsure whether I should give up “I” for “God”. I started attending Sunday service regularly and by late March 2017, I decided to join a carecell led by Brother Kelvin and Sister Winnie. It was in March 2017 that I truly accepted Christ in my heart and my spirits have been uplifted ever since. I just feel love and peace coming from something residing in my heart!

In April 2017, I started to attend the 2.5-hour sessions of Bible Study Fellowship every week. That certainly helped me partake of God’s Word in a deep manner. I sought to learn and understand the many parables that Jesus taught His disciples. It whetted my appetite for a deeper pursuit of the Word. I needed to know more of

Photo credit: Coco Choo



My graduation

God in the Bible: *What is He doing in me through the Holy Spirit? What more can I do for Him? How do I reconcile God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit?*

At the recommendation of Sister Winnie, I signed up for the School of Ministry at Tung Ling Bible School. It was a three-month Bible course with a wide coverage of topics in selected books. The Theology class helped unravel the mystery of the Holy Trinity and helped me understand so much more of His amazing power. It also enabled me to undertake various disciplines aligned with God’s will and purpose.

As I continue to walk in God’s path, I’m letting go of my past sinful bondages and restoring myself to be closer to His image. After all, we are created in God’s image (Genesis 1:27) from the beginning.



A screen shot of my graduation

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