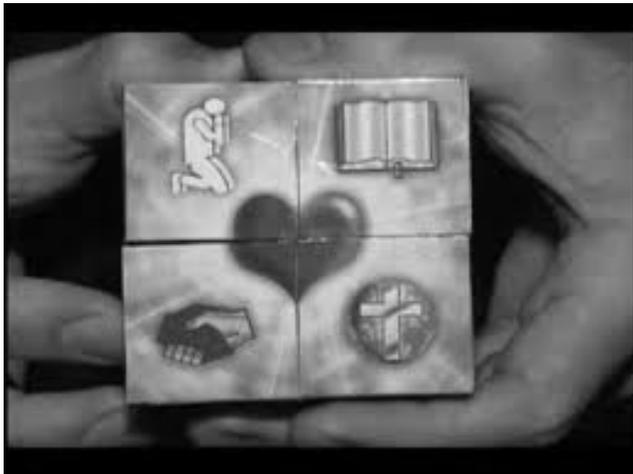


Rochester Chinese Christian Church

ECHO

June 2012 Volume 30 No. 1



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Rochester Chinese Christian Church
羅城華人基督教會



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English Sunday Worship
9:30 am

中文主日學
上午九時三十分

English Sunday School
11:15 am

中文主日崇拜
上午十一時十五分

Call the church for other
**fellowship, bible study
& youth group meetings**

欲知其他團契聚會
查經班，請電教會

Rochester Chinese Christian Church West
羅城西區華人基督教會



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主日崇拜
Sunday Worship
下午 4:00 - 5:15 pm

主日學
Sunday School
下午 5:20 - 6:15 pm





He Led Them Forth by the Right Way (Psalm 107:7)

Pastor Mitchell Herring

Recently I read a devotional by C.H. Spurgeon that really spoke to me. It is honest and authentic. It is encouraging and edifying. A couple weeks ago I shared it with our Wednesday evening English prayer group. As we face many changes in our lives and the life of our church, I want to share it here too, and pray that it will be an encouragement to many....

Changeful experience often leads the anxious believer to enquire "Why is it thus with me?" I looked for light, but lo, darkness came; for peace, but behold trouble. I said in my heart, my mountain stands firm, I shall never be moved. Lord, thou dost hide thy face, and I am troubled (Ps. 30:7). It was but yesterday that I could read my title clear; to-day my evidences are bedimmed, and my hopes are clouded. Yesterday I could climb to Pisgah's top, and view the landscape o'er, and rejoice with confidence in my future inheritance; to-day, my spirit has no hopes, but many fears; no joys, but much distress. Is this part of God's plan with me? Can this be the way in which God would bring me to heaven? Yes, it is even so. The eclipse of your faith, the darkness of your mind, the fainting of your hope, all these things are but parts of God's method of making you ripe for the great inheritance upon which you shall soon enter. These trials are for the testing and strengthening of your faith—they are waves that wash you further upon the rock—they are winds which waft your ship the more swiftly towards the desired haven. According to David's words, so it might be said of you, "so he brings them to their desired haven" (Ps. 107:30). By honor and dishonor, by evil report and by good report, by plenty and by poverty, by joy and by distress, by persecution and by peace, by all these things is the life of your souls maintained, and by each of these are you helped on your way. Oh, think not, believer, that your sorrows are out of God's plan; they are necessary parts of it. "We must, through much tribulation, enter the kingdom" (Acts 14:22). Learn, then, even to "count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations."

"O let my trembling soul be still,
And wait thy wise, thy holy will!
I cannot, Lord, thy purpose see,
Yet all is well since ruled by thee."

Sin is so “Delicious”

Pastor Peter Ho

Background

The president of a public relations company in Shanghai tested the search engine her company's client was about to launch. She did a search on her college sweetheart who disappeared eight years ago. The search came back with a familiar name. She was initially shocked, but eventually agreed to meet him, albeit reluctantly. When they finally sat down to talk, her anger flared up within a few exchanges and she walked away furiously. He ran after her, but his prosthetic foot failed him. She came back to help, and this time around, she managed to calm herself.

He explained what happened to his foot. He was walking to the place where they had agreed to meet eight years ago, but was hit by a car on the way and was hospitalized. At that time she thought he stood her up, so she went to his house, but his parents told her he had gone overseas to study. After he was released from the hospital, he went to look for her, but she had moved from her apartment and transferred to another college. Since then, she was vengeful toward all men. She would develop close relationships with one man after another and then leave them. Meanwhile, he had founded a computer company in Beijing and landed himself a spot among the one hundred richest men in the country.

With the misunderstanding resolved, they tried to rekindle their relationship between Shanghai and Beijing. Then came Richard, one of her former boyfriends, who had just come back to Shanghai after two years of unsuccessful stint in the US. He was able to find her and wanted to revive their relationship, even offered to be her “pet.” Initially she wanted nothing to do with him, but he was persistent. So she relented and allowed him to be at her side. She even enjoyed this clandestine relationship, especially when her “pet” treated her like a queen.

The above is an excerpt of a TV drama series. As the plot developed, I watched in disbelief, “Why is she so foolish? Why doesn't she open up her past to her boyfriend and ask for forgiveness? Why does she allow herself to be manipulated by Richard? Why can't she break free from Richard? Can't she discern who really loves her? Doesn't she realize how much she might hurt her boyfriend?” Then one day as I was doing the dishes, the drama scenes flashed in my mind, and together with it the title of this article popped up: Sin is so “delicious!”

When Richard treated her like a queen and she felt like she was in control of their relationship, she enjoyed every bit of it. It was “delicious!” She found no reason to discontinue it and was enraged when her best friend charged her of infidelity. It was only when Richard refused to be constantly in the back seat that she started to be alarmed. At one point, Richard told her a make-up story about a pet dog whose owner brought her boyfriend home. The dog got jealous and killed its owner’s boyfriend. Upon hearing this story, she shuddered. What’s more, Richard had even captured images of their intimate scenes and threatened to make them public if she did not follow his instructions. Being unhappy with the extortions he was able to squeeze out of her, Richard eventually aimed for a much bigger sum from her boyfriend by kidnapping her, but was killed as he was about to get a hold of the ransom.

The redemptive themes of the story are immediately obvious when Richard, who played the devil, asked for a ransom in return for “leaving her alone” and got killed when the ransom was paid. Christ paid the ransom for our sins with His blood, but the Devil was conquered just when it seemed to have won the battle.

This article, however, will focus on the early part of the above story, on how she got herself entangled in the web, and curiously enough, stayed entangled even though she could shake loose from it. At the onset, the idea of rekindling the relationship with Richard may seem disgusting to her, but Richard’s persistence overcame her.



Once succeeded to get her attention, Richard made his appearance seem desirable and harmless (After the serpent succeeded in getting Eve’s attention, “the woman saw that the tree was *good* for food, and that it was a *delight* to the eyes, and that the tree was to be *desired* to make one wise, ...,” Gen 3:6). Then sin began to take root (see James 1:15).

Those who have done yard work know that if weeds are not taken care of, they can grow into waist-high bushes, then into tall trees with deep and spread out roots. Common sense tells us it is much easier to pull the weeds than to chainsaw a tree and dig out its roots.

Why do people then let the weeds grow instead of pulling it when it was still easy to do so? Why did people not deal with their sins at the onset, but instead let it become a habit, assuming that they have been born again and want to have nothing to do with sin? Because sin is “delicious!” As Christians, we know we should not continue in sin because we are born of God (Rom 6:1; 1 John 3:9), but there is a certain degree of inexplicable affection for sin within us. It is no wonder the apostle Paul says that “If I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me (Rom 7:20),” or St. Augustine prays in his *Confessions*, “Grant me chastity and continence, but not yet.” He explains what he means:

There was a pear-tree close to our vineyard, heavily laden with fruit, which was tempting neither for its color nor its flavor. To shake and rob this some of us wanton young fellows went, late one night, and carried away great loads, not to eat ourselves, but to fling to the very swine, having only eaten some of them; and to do this pleased us all the more because it was not permitted. ... It was foul, and I loved it. I loved to perish. I loved my own error— not that for which I erred, but the error itself.

Have you heard of the adage, “forbidden fruit tastes the sweetest?” At first thought, it is unthinkable to taste of the forbidden fruit, but it is luring. Have you ever tasted the “deliciousness” of sin? If sin were not “delicious,” you probably would not be hooked. Do you give your spouse “silent treatment” even if she has asked for your forgiveness? You probably think it is “delicious” to punish her some more. Do you keep doing something even if you know it irritates your spouse? You are probably savoring the “deliciousness” of crossing him. Have you withheld some helpful information from your co-worker who has wronged you previously? You probably want to taste the “deliciousness” of revenge. Have you revisited your past sins recently? You are probably reminiscent of the sweetness of that particular sin. You and I need to repent of cravings such as these!

A man dreamed that he died and went to hell. He was brought to a beautiful and exotic place that was beyond his imagination. He met many nice personalities there, and was treated as a VIP. He soon concluded that he would rather be in hell than in heaven. He woke up and continued living with that conviction. When he died, he was sent to hell. He was brought to a place with heart-rending cries. He asked why the place was different now. The answer: he came before at the promotional period!

Grace to Dance and Path to RCCC

Dona Watkins

Dancing brings joy to people. Yet, some believe dance has no place in the Church. It is an understandable point of view. For dance known to most people is of a worldly nature. Yet even since Old Testament times artisans, craftsman, musicians, dress makers and dancers worshipped with their gifts as holy unto the Lord.

From my childhood, I longed to learn to dance. All my life, I had a desire to dance. Finally at age 35, I started to dance, but I danced for the Lord. Dance is in part how my husband, Michael, and I are here at RCCC.

During international Messiah Conference of Christian Jews and Gentiles, a pastor and his wife prayed for me. The wife paused and asked, "Do you dance for the Lord?" I responded I danced in a Messianic Jewish (Christian) dance troop. She said, "I mean do you worship the Lord with dance?"

Her question perplexed me. I knew she was familiar with Messianic dance, Jewish circle folk dance as an expression of worship unto the Lord Jesus Christ. She clarified, asking if I danced interpretively unto God. I did not. She believed God was prompting her to pray for me along those lines and that it would include global ministry.

This was strange, I thought. Locally performing Messianic Jewish dance in churches is enough. I was too old. Surely formal dance training is necessary. Yet she was an elder and a pastor's wife, so I knew not to discredit her faith, not even in my heart. I left the matter to the Lord.

Years later, I met a retired ballerina, Sue. Once coming to salvation in Jesus Christ, she quit professional ballet and entered dance ministry, touring Europe, Australia and Israel teaching and ministering with dance in great cathedrals and churches to the Body of Christ.

Sue asked me to train with her for free. How peculiar this seemed, yet with my childhood desire and a skilled instructor, I submitted to ballet and interpretative dance training weekly for almost two years. This was not easy. Through training I was learning submission. I thought, *why am I doing this? What eternal purpose is this? How does this glorify God?* Yet, in my heart I knew God wanted me to dance.

When Sue and I were asked to go to Singapore all expenses paid to teach dance workshops for a Christian college outreach, I recalled

the scripture, freely you have been given, freely give. That dance instruction and ministry came without us seeking and always as a gift astounded me. In Singapore, Sue and I taught many workshops and performed. God was being glorified when a Christian Taiwanese tea master, John, who taught at colleges and corporations, explained learning dance worship unto the Lord inspired him. Upon his return to Taiwan he planned to reach out to others using Christian dance. He was a former skilled dancer. The workshops inspired him to use Christian dance as a tool for evangelism.

I was invited three more times to Singapore and Thailand. One woman, Amy, ran a ballroom dance studio. Today using dance ministry, Amy rescues women who work in so-called massage businesses.

Naturally-speaking dance as a ministry seemed odd. Yet, as I danced by faith overcoming doubt and unbelief, I learned when we do what God leads us to do, He can direct us in ways we would not be able to do on our own. He leads us in paths of righteousness for His namesake (Psalm 23). In those paths we are partakers of His inheritance in Christ, expressed through His life working through us.

“Consider the retinue of grace. Grace has a retinue. Whatever grace the saints have, they have it but as a retinue”, writes William Bridge, (*Works of Reverend William Bridge* Volume 1, page 170). During dance, I continually drew on His grace. I could not have danced for the Lord without drawing on His life, even as much as dancing blessed me.

Colossians 1:12: Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

“You have but one heir to your estate, all are not heirs. But all God’s children have an inheritance. And the inheritance (is) called an inheritance of light. It does not lie in a dark, foggy, and fenny, and Moorish place, it is a comfortable inheritance. It is an inheritance of light. The apostle does not here give thanks unto God for the inheritance; but that they were partakers of the inheritance, that they had an earnest: till the inheritance came,” continues Bridge.

This was my faith toward God with dance. Knowing God wanted me to dance I kept earnest at it even during difficult times or when dance seemed insignificant. When we look upon something God

opens for us, we need to keep looking without deciding it's a small value.

Bridge writes, "All the grace which a godly man hath on this side heaven, it is but an earnest. You look upon it as it is in itself, and you say; it is not much. Aye, but look upon it as an earnest, and then you will say, it is much indeed. Oh, it is much indeed."

Dance has been this to me. I have been ever thankful to God for dance. Over 12 years, it has led me to my best Christian friend, a Singaporean woman, and has led me to work with Michael. God's grace to dance led to discern God's prompting, "Don't you want to learn Chinese?", and then confirmed separately by my husband, for us to know to come to RCCC.

So I leave you with a question. What small seemingly peculiar work has God lead you in? May you look upon it with earnestness and see that indeed it is much, to the glory of God. And, may you enjoy being a partaker of His inheritance.

Mission Trip to Kuwait

Shaun and Jasmine Weeks

The second short term mission trip back to Kuwait started with an invitation from brothers and sisters from the Chinese congregation of St. Paul's church. They are still without a shepherd; Singapore Diocese who has responded to our Macedonian call has periodically sent their ministers over in short terms but nobody could go serve full-time yet.....

Sister Peijin has started her seminary training at Singapore Bible College a year and a half ago; she is halfway done now. Brother Ming, who is lawyer by trade, is courageously undertaking the responsibility of overseeing the group. Many more brothers have joined the group ever since his leading. Praise the Lord! One positive thing after we left!

We were encouraged to see quite a few new faces of people who have been baptized and joined the fellowship. More heart-warming is hearing testimonies from their own mouths which confirmed their unity in helping and relating with one another. There were communications and caring for each other's needs; there were also reaching out in sharing their faith and bringing new people in; but

they are still young in faith and need support from mature Christians.....

Our arrival in Kuwait was welcome with a smaller crowd and quieter airport, a good start since we truly needed some rest after the overnight drive from Rochester to NYC and the fourteen hours journey in the air. After feasting on some "Fatayers", some local bread that has cheese or spinach in it, we were down for an afternoon nap. In the evening, after more local bread, "Shuwamar", we discussed the plan for the next day service and the plan ahead.

Jasmine shared in the service and helped teach some new songs on the first Friday. God blessed us with a beautiful weather that afternoon that we could catch up with the old and meet up with the new brothers and sisters at a park near the beach after some quick lunch at the food court in the Mall. There were organized activities that many participated and had a fun time. Quite a few old friends who brought their new friends came by to say "Hi". Jasmine tried to encourage the "old" friends and sow the seeds in the "new".



The next few days were quieter without many appointments. We took the opportunity to meet up with our missionary friends, doing more intercession, doing some homework, and preparing for the next Friday. After that, there were more appointments that were requested than we could keep. One lady we visited used to be a pimp. She came to our church, was baptized and just recently married an American.

We accepted an invitation to visit with her and her husband at their apartment. Another Chinese couple also joined us. Shaun was able to share with the husband who works in the communication field. We had a good time of fellowship with one another.

On one evening our family and Ming went out to dinner to celebrate our wedding anniversary. After dinner we walked to the area in the city where there is the N.E.C.K (National Evangelical Church of Kuwait) compound. There has been a lot of construction around the area and now a highway underpass passes very near the area. There is still a foot bridge to access the church, but access to it is not easy as before. While the city is expanding there are people in the Kuwait parliament who want to restrict the church from growing. Recently, a member of Kuwait parliament proposed that Christians

should only be allowed to meet in registered buildings. This will be very difficult, because there are only four officially recognized church facilities. They are the N.E.C.K compound and Catholic Church in the city and the St Paul's Church and Catholic Church down in Ahmadhi in the South. These facilities are already packed and several groups meet throughout the week. For the last few years the church we were a part of has met in a house.

The English congregation of St Paul's Church has decided that they will move the Friday morning service down to the Church in Ahmadhi. This presents a problem for the Chinese Church. Many of those who come to the church do not have their own transportation so they take either a bus or a taxi to come. The current location is not far from a couple bus stops and is near the area where many of them live. The location in Ahmadhi is away from the city and does not have much public transportation.

The second Friday when we were there, Shaun shared a message about how God leads us through the wilderness and provides salvation. The scriptures used from the account of when Moses led the people through the wilderness, but because they complained God sent snakes among them. Then God instructed Moses to put a bronze snake on a pole and whoever looked at the snake would be saved. This points to how Jesus would be raised up to pay the penalty for our sin and if we look to and fully trust in Him we will be saved.

Then Jasmine led a workshop on the first three chapters of Revelation, focusing on how God addresses each of the Seven Churches and the encouragements, warnings and challenges to be overcome. There were eleven people who attended for about three hours. It was encouraging to see their eagerness to learn. One of the brothers pointed to a picture that hunged in the house where we meet. It was a picture of John the apostle seeing Jesus in the midst of seven lamps. He said, "Now I understand the picture." He always wondered what the picture represented. This was a confirmation that God was using what was shared.

Friday evening was our last chance to meet together as we were leaving early Saturday morning. Several people came over to the apartment where we were staying and we prepared some food and had fellowship with one another. One sister shared with Jasmine that some things that Jasmine had told her years ago, she was now beginning to understand. The blessing of God's Word is that it will and does produce fruit in people.

This leads to the request part of this article. How can you help? The best thing we can do is to pray. Here are some specific ways that you can pray for the Chinese Church in Kuwait:

- Pray that God would open up a place for the Chinese Church to meet after the English congregation moves. The N.E.C.K compound would be a more ideal location since many buses come into the city.
- That the Church in Kuwait would be steadfast in their most precious faith even in the midst of pressure and oppression from the Islamists in Parliament.
- Pray that God would lead a full time minister to desire to go to Kuwait to be able to shepherd and lead the Chinese Church.
- Pray that the brothers and sisters would continue to encourage one another and care for each other.

LIVE FOR JESUS

The Flower City Work Camp Experience

Justin Tang

Coming into the Youth Group, I was barely involved with it in my first year as a Seventh-grader. Not until I started coming a lot more often by the end of the year did I hear of such events as the 30 Hour Famine and Flower City Work Camp. By the time I reached Eighth Grade, however, I had become much, much more attached to the other guys in the church's so-called "cool kid club," making friends that I had no idea I would befriend at the same time in the previous year as well as developing a stronger, more naïve passion for God and doing "Godly" things. But as for Flower City Work Camp, for some reason I thought it was just going to be another boring, stereotypical "Christian day camp" in which there were extremely authoritarian regulations mandating harsh, "Christian" rules. But since my new friends were all going to Flower City and I had nothing better to do during Spring Break, I decided that I had no excuse not to go and decided to give Flower City a try.

I have to tell you, I was literally blown away.

Flower City Work Camp was nothing like I had imagined it, and I'll say that I regret thinking that it was going to be what I thought. That

first year, I met a whole variety of new faces, whether they were in my worksite or sharing a room with my church, and surprisingly, I thought they were pretty cool people (couldn't think of another way to put it). The food was actually pretty good, there was dodgeball and basketball, and I actually enjoyed the speakers and the worship music, which was the first time in a long time I found myself doing so in a church-sponsored event. Also for those of you who wanted to know, I was a participant in the last great pillow fight before the leaders at BCC (Browncroft Community Church) stopped them. To sum it up, I thought it was "pretty freaking awesome."

Most importantly, however, this was the first time I ever saw some average-looking adolescents my own age really fired up for the Lord, and I will never forget the passion that these people showed, trying to show the light of Christ into the city of Rochester. In the prayer walks, lunchtime devotionals, and even in some of the conversations we had with each other, a lot of the people I had met in my sites or on the streets had some touching spiritual insight. Sometimes they were even role models on how to live to the fullest while pleasing God at the same time, something I had previously thought was impossible.

The theme for Flower City that first year, *Ruined*, was put into near perfect timing with the events that had happened in my own life. It was almost as if the Lord Himself wanted me to change my view on life. Just as the theme stated that people's ambitions and sinfulness had to be "ruined" in order for them to truly see God, it was through tough times in middle school that I had seen that there is more to life than worldly success and rediscovered God. In middle school, my ambitions for popularity and success began to push God out of my life, and it was when this vain ambition failed me that I realized my need for God. Going to Flower City that year was a reminder of this.

The first time I had participated in Flower City Work Camp was admittedly one of the best weeks of my life. It opened up my eyes to the possibilities of what God can do with those faithful to Him as well as the fact that to be a true Christian does not mean living a constricted lifestyle, but rather a lifestyle that is freed from the ambitions and sinful nature of this world. By the end of the week, the immature middle-school boy who had suspicions about living a "Christian" life and Flower City itself had become a still-immature middle-school boy who had a change in heart and was crying to relive the preceding week for its profound spiritual effect. That's right. For those of you who may perceive me as the big, tough guy in the Youth Group, I was actually crying in bittersweet joy.

Over the course of the next few years, I returned to Flower City Work Camp every single year that I was still in high school. I reunited with the friends I had made the previous years, seen some of my classmates there whom I had no idea would participate, and continued to see the Spirit of God in my fellow workers, leaders, and home site owners. As I continued to grow spiritually, mentally, and physically (such as getting brawnier), God surprised me by showing me what I could do with faith in Him. Throughout these years, it was also touching to see how our work and actions touched the homeowners as well as the neighborhood as a whole, as well as seeing the spiritual gifts that some of our homeowners had.

Overall, for me, volunteering at Flower City Work Camp became a tradition, fun, and one of the best decisions I've ever made, as it made me aware of those who were in need in the city, and also made me aware that I was in need as well in the spiritual sense. I hope my experiences have informed you about what it's really like to take part in this powerful camp and maybe even compelled you to consider taking a part in it in any way possible.

Childlike Faith

Sammy Lee

I have worked with kids at Music and Bible Camp here at RCCC and also on missions trips. However, this past April, God gave me the opportunity to serve on a "Sidewalk Club," working with kids from the city of Rochester at Flower City Work Camp. I praise God for the various experiences I had and the stories I now have that I could never recount in one sitting. Nonetheless there are particular experiences that God used to open my own eyes and draw me back closer to Him.

During the week at Sidewalk Club, God truly opened my heart to remember just how awesome His love is and that I must simply give all my trust to Him. My assigned role on my team was to teach the verse and share and the gospel using an evangelism tool, known as the Evangecube. I was nervous about this role as it was my first time ever doing a Sidewalk Club. I also felt burdened with pressure to make sure that I could effectively share the gospel message to the kids in a way to keep them engaged and interested. I remember asking one of my team leaders, "Do I teach the verse and share the message from the Evangecube *everyday*?!" In the back of mind I was thinking that if I was a kid who came to a Sidewalk Club I would get bored if things were the same everyday. I expected kids to be

disruptive, claiming they already knew the story or complaining that they had already done the activity.

My preconceived notion and thoughts, however, were quelled by the end of our first camp on the first day. Surprisingly I found the kids overflowing with excitement and joy to learn the verse and also listen to the Evangecube. There was a nine year old boy named Kahlil who came to all of our Sidewalk Clubs except the last day. He came to our first club held in a park, and even to our second club in a backyard only a few blocks down the street, in the same day. At first I expected him to be a disruptive kid, who would go to the second Sidewalk Club and upset the flow of our program. I thought to myself, "Why would a kid want to keep coming to the next club, when it's all the same games, songs, Bible stories...?" But I was surprised again when he still was eager to go to all of our Sidewalk Clubs regardless that it was repetitive for him. Moreover, it was even more amazing to see Kahlil begin to help us during each Sidewalk Club. He would get to the park before we got there and helped up set up our tent. During the club he even began helping us in playing roles in the skit, or helping me share the Evangecube with the other kids. Undoubtedly I was blessed by Kahlil as God stirred up a love in my heart for Jesus, by seeing other kids with a great heart and love for Jesus.

Mark 10:15 says, "Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." Jesus' words to the disciples convey the idea that we must have faith like a child's. But what does that mean? Childlike faith has such an awe and sense of wonder in knowing God. Childlike faith has the beauty of simply believing in God. We must trust in God like a child would trust in something steadfastly. In my experience on Sidewalk Club I realized the great love and passion that they had to know God. Along with my experience with Kahlil, spending one-on-one time with some amazing kids from the city reminded me of how His love never changes. I especially enjoyed going over the "flipper-flapper" with the kids, with some of them not knowing what it was at all, or knowing the whole gospel message and explaining it back to me. I often forget that everyday I am unworthy of God's grace and I also forget how great His unfailing love is for us. But it's reminders like these, from Sidewalk Club, that bring me back to a childlike faith and lead me to surrender all I have to Jesus.

Goodbye ... Again

Jack Yu

For the second time in less than ten years, my family and I are saying goodbye to Rochester and our beloved church family here. On the surface, it might seem obvious that with Kodak -- my Rochester employer -- going through difficult times, I might need to find another job, which in turn might require relocation. However, the deeper story is that my family and I love Rochester and would have made every effort to avoid leaving if it hadn't become abundantly clear to us that the Lord was leading us to do so.

Kodak had been struggling for many years, but throughout that time I had not sought other work because my background and skills suggested that I would have to look outside of Rochester to find a suitable job. Even when it became clear that Kodak was in danger of bankruptcy, I held onto the hope that something big -- winning a major outstanding lawsuit, for example, or receiving a great price for a portfolio of patents we were trying to sell -- would extend the life of the company long enough for a real turnaround. However, in December of 2011 my director ended a group meeting on a foreboding note. He could not tell us specifically about what would happen when, but he hinted that layoffs were coming and that it was time for all of us to focus on the well-being of ourselves and our families.

At this, I began to actively search for another job. To my surprise, I found a local job opening that seemed to fit my background almost perfectly. Since I knew very few people in the Rochester area could claim the specific experience that made me such a good fit for the position, I thought I would be a shoe-in candidate. Sure enough, the hiring manager asked me in as soon as she got my resume and then invited me on-site for multiple interviews. A few days later, however, I was surprised to learn that I had not gotten the job. From a human standpoint, I had thought that I was a perfect fit. But I'd had enough similar experiences to know that what makes sense from a human standpoint isn't always what God wants. So while I was mildly disappointed, I simply accepted that the job was not what God intended for me, and vice versa.

In January 2012 I was contacted by a recruiter at Bose Corporation, near Boston, regarding a position. She had actually contacted me during the previous fall about the same position, but at the time I'd told her that my family and I were not interested in leaving the Rochester area and so I could not consider the opportunity. (From the job description she had given me, it had sounded like a long

shot for me, anyway.) This time around, though, I said that I was interested, so we set an appointment to talk via telephone. Just before the call, Kodak management called an all-hands meeting at which they broke the news that Kodak had filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. It was not really surprising to any of us employees, given the company's downward slide over the past several years that had seemed to accelerate in the past few months. But it was still shocking that Kodak, an iconic and beloved American company, was now under bankruptcy protection.



The following week, I had numerous interviews with Bose: first with the hiring manager by telephone, then on-site with several of his colleagues. At the beginning of the week after that, Bose made me an offer. I asked for an additional week to consider it.

I believe that one way God speaks to us and leads us is through His providence over the circumstances around us, and in this case the circumstances seemed to point strongly towards accepting the offer. Kodak had gotten into serious trouble, I had interviewed for and failed to get a local job for which I should have been a "shoe-in", Bose had contacted me twice for a job I wouldn't have sought out and didn't even think I was qualified for, and now they had decided they wanted me for it. However, I also don't believe in simply "going with the flow" of circumstance, and so Cathy and I waited upon the Lord. We offered the situation to Him in prayer, and asked others to do the same on our behalf.

What we felt the Lord was saying to us was "Go".

We didn't know why the Lord wanted us to go. From our standpoint, He was using and blessing us right here in Rochester, so what would be the point of having us start anew elsewhere? But again, we recognized that God's plan may not always make sense from our human viewpoint. So we put our trust in Him and decided to go as He led us, even if we didn't understand.

I accepted the offer at the beginning of the following week, and announced my resignation from Kodak. Later that same week, Kodak announced that the division in which I worked would be shut down, eliminating my job and 400 others worldwide. The Lord had provided me a way out just in time.

Again, my family and I love Rochester and our church family here, and leaving here would have been a very difficult choice to make if we hadn't felt so strongly that the Lord was leading us to go. So, in fact, the choice was easy, but we know that the goodbye will be very difficult.

Although my family and I have been involved with RCCC since the mid-1990s, it's been in the past few years that I've really grown to love and appreciate the church, and in which I feel the Lord has been doing the most work on me through it. When I compare my spiritual life now with where I was the first time we left Rochester, I can definitely see that the Lord has been at work on me, taking more of my focus away from myself and towards Him. Don't get me wrong -- I still have a long way to go -- but I definitely see progress from ten years ago, and I am thankful to the Lord for His faithfulness.

I know my family and I will miss RCCC dearly. There are many things about our church that I really appreciate. I appreciate our focus on directing all glory to God, acknowledgement of His sovereignty, and deep respect for His Word. I appreciate the way so many give so freely of themselves to serve in the church. I appreciate the genuine love, caring, and consideration I see between brothers and sisters. I love that, when my Chinese-speaking brothers and sisters are having a conversation in Chinese and I join in, they switch to English out of consideration for me (although I can understand some Mandarin!) I love that, despite clear differences in people's preferences when it comes to worship music, we sing worship with songs from a range of styles, and with no one insisting that his /her preferences be favored. I love the concern and support that brothers and sisters have for one another throughout the areas of our lives and throughout our weeks; we are definitely not a Sunday-only fellowship! This is the kind of consideration for others, even if at the cost of one's own preferences or "rights", that I believe Paul spends a good amount of time describing in the book of 1 Corinthians. And I believe that the culture of RCCC embodies this loving consideration.

RCCC is family to us. Cathy and I met and were married here. Our children were dedicated and brought up here, cared for and taught by many of you. As we prepare to leave, I know that RCCC will always hold a special place in our hearts. Through our involvement in the Youth Group, JAM, MBC, Board, English fellowship, accountability group, worship ministry, and Grapes fellowship, the Lord has blessed us with countless memories that we deeply cherish. "I thank my God every time I remember you." Thank you all

for the love and support you have freely given to my family and me, and may the Lord often bless us with fond remembrances of each other. And as long as God has us in the Boston area, brothers and sisters of RCCC always have an open invitation to visit!

Letter from San Francisco

Dear brothers & sisters,

It has been two months since I moved to the Bay Area. As I'm writing this letter I look outside my office, the rising sun is casting its light over the Oakland bridge, cargo ships moving in and out of the San Francisco bay, I'm in a bit of disbelief that I'm thousands of miles away from Rochester, a place I called home for the past 30 years.

At the end of last year when Minnie and I decided that it's in the family's best interest to leave Kodak, it really took a leap of faith as I had no idea what things might turn out. And it was not a comfortable feeling to be without a job after working for over 30 years. But God is good, and He is faithful. Not only did He open multiple opportunities for me within a short period of time, I got an offer from an unlikely place in San Francisco, where we can be closer to Minnie's family and our son.

Thanks for the kindness of Minnie's brother I was able to stay at his house which is right on the train route to my office. And shortly after I landed, Lois brother Phil introduced me to his church, the Sunset Church, an absolutely wonderful church with many similarities to RCCC, except a much bigger congregation. Pastor Fung's sermon is always remindful as well encouraging. At the recent Easter Sunday, he reminds the congregation that hope exists because of the truth of resurrection, and hope shines not when we are doing well, but when we are in difficult times. Many people give up on their lives not because of one single incident, but through a continuous, gradual corrosion of hope. I know that for I've been there, due either through to family tragedies or job situations. But somehow God is always there, He never lets go of me - - despite all my short comings - - and His grace is always sufficient for me to face life's adversities. Recently Minnie held an open house to sell our house, and received two offers in the first day, and we are very thankful for that.

On the lighter side, contrary to the popular belief, I find myself not missing Wegmans. (Sorry Mr. Wegman!) This may have to do with the abundance of food marts and grocery stores here. But I do miss the simple living, the you-can-go-anywhere-in-ten-minutes traffic, the Finger Lakes, Abbotts frozen custard, and most of all the genuine kindness of Rochesterians. Last I want to take this opportunity to those who have been so helpful to Minnie in many ways at a time she has to shoulder everything on her own. Please do visit us next time you come out to the Bay Area. At the mean time, stay warm, and God Bless.

In Christ,
Goldwyn
April 21, 2012

A Retrospect

Johnny Lynn

A look to the shadowy recollections,
Spurs me to grief as to sorrow.
The past few years camp reflections
Hope to uphold me on the morrow,
More my master imitations follow.

Green verdure, the camp clad in the open air,
The stars, the moon, the sun throw their beams.
Ever a picturesque site met I so rare;
The first time attending there seems
Me dream in the fairy dreams.

Enjoy the days first my thought with delight,
To relax to the open field I came
While touched by the jocund sight
Press on me further to my aim.
A boy cannot be so tame.

But my master with His might
Miraculously and meticulously His divine meet.
Appareled His creation in celestial light
Brood me a sad thought sweet,
As I observed the nature at night.

What is the purpose of our Life?
 Is what Shakespeare in Macbeth saying,
 As he treated and predicted our life?
 "A tale full of sound and fury signifying nothing!"
 Then the dead are far better than alive.

Our life in sixty or seventy ends,
 Is what our Life's all?!
 No life after death our present sends.
 A dreary life and too a bore,
 No need to drag through this life more.

In calm despair was I wreathed.
 A perturbation in my youth heart keep.
 Behold! The calmer night I breathed,
 Taught me a lesson deep,
 A belief that is hardly disbelieved.

The soft breeze fanned my wet face
 As if a voice drew me nigh,
 "Give me your will and take my pace
 The true meaning of LIFE will plain I,
 To save under my banner the human race."

A fierce conflict, stirred in me,
 A loss and pain to give away my way.
 Ad go over to the wide, wide lea,
 Preach the barbarians the salvation every day.
 No earthly profit can I see.

I hesitated and a moment stagger.
 Depressed my thought and tried to forget
 The illusion it seemed the hour.
 But no peace nor rest it left
 When I saw the blooming flower.

At last I yield my Master my life
 In that blissful breezing night.
 Not that to run away from the strife,
 But more to take up the battle fight
 To throw a light on others from the height.

A full flooding joy befell
 My mind rose in happy morn,

Like the water welling up from the well,
 Like the parents seeing the first new infant born,
 Like the vapor leaving the night forlorn.

O sorrow, O grief, to the followed passing years
 The blissful voice be not heard again,
 As if my heavy waxed ears
 Catch the voice in vain because of pain;
 Or that the works and sins of men,

Intrude His divine to reveal
 To us His wonderful will sublime
 So as to let the heathens view
 His true disciples from our mine.
 "More like Him", quotes He, "Fine!"

Or that to maturity we grow,
 Worldly affair chokes us more.
 Disbelief and reason to us show
 The divine revelation is fool,
 And our rationality a poor.

O God, forgive and forget our sins,
 Bestow upon us this coming camp,
 Your endless everlasting treasured blessings,
 That we may be your stamp
 In our life long tramp.

