

Rochester Chinese Christian Church

ECHO

December 2014 Volume 32 No. 2



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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





Musings from China

Pastor Mitchell Herring

"The Lord is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who take refuge in Him." Nahum 1:7 (KJV)

✞ I have been blessed by the opportunity to serve in China twice this past year, and I am especially thankful to our board for permitting me such extended time away. I would like to share a few thoughts that came to me in various different situations during my recent time there. I will point out three:

FAITH- Being unable to sleep is not necessarily a bad thing! One morning around 4am I was laying there thinking about faith, and my coming to China. I was a little anxious before the first trip last March, somewhat less this time. But in both cases, I sought and was *keenly aware* of the Lord's sovereign leading, provision, and watchfulness over me, "from the moment I walked out the door of my home until the moment I walked back in." Laying there in bed that morning in China, I thought, "Is that what faith is? What is it about *'faith'*? Why is it so critical? Why is the Lord's working so dependent on it? Why did the people's unbelief keep the Lord from doing much work in His hometown (Mark. 6:5-6)? Why is the key to our life with the Lord that *'the righteous shall live by his faith'*" (Habakkuk 2:4)? Then a passage came to my mind. "...*He knows those who take refuge in Him*" (Nahum 1:7). That's it!! Eureka! (apologies to Archimedes). "Faith" is effective, not as some magical tool to have God do our bidding, but because *those who by it commit themselves to Him are known, noticed, and honored by God through Christ. He takes note of them.* "He knows those who take refuge in Him." He knows those who trust, who commit themselves to Him, and those who honor Him, and He is delighted to honor that trust and take them under His care. In other words, *His response to our covenant faith is His covenant faithfulness.* Does this mean that all we have to do is believe hard enough and we will get whatever we want? *Absolutely not!* That is superstition, pagan faith, not the faith of the Bible. "Those who take refuge in Him" refers to those who trust in His righteousness, love, faithfulness, and sovereign will,

no matter what His answer is. That is faith. It refers to those who are acutely aware of their weakness and dependence, and that if they accomplish anything, it is only because the Lord is holding them up and working in them, leading them, and watching over them. God's sovereignty is their peace, confidence, comfort, strength, and safety. As a result of such trust, they submit to His revealed will, with a conscience toward Him. *"Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right"* (1 Peter. 4:19). Only in the grace of that faith did I dare take this trip. Praise the Lord for my insomnia that night!

PRAYER- One day in class a student sitting near the front asked a question about Jesus' prayer on earth. How do we understand it? What kind of example does it set for us? If Jesus needed to pray, how much more do we? As I began to respond to this question, some thoughts began to crystallize in my mind. I said something like, "Sure, it is an example for us. But it is more than that. Jesus prays to the Father, *"...for you loved me before the foundation of the world"* (John 17:24). Jesus' prayers on earth were actually just a *continuation of His communion with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit which He enjoyed as the second person of the Trinity from before the foundation of the world.* That communion did not cease after the incarnation. But after He became flesh, it took the form of "prayer." However it was essentially the same communion, one with, and part of the ongoing communion within the Trinity, which the Son enjoyed with the Father and Spirit from all eternity.

So what does that mean for you and me? It means the Lord's admonition to us to pray is nothing less than *His invitation to us, His people, to enter into the intimate love, communion, and fellowship of the Trinity.* As He also said to them, *"He who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me; and He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love Him and disclose myself to Him"* (John 14:21).

CULTURE- On the bus one beautiful Saturday autumn afternoon, a friend from the States who I came to know in China mentioned a pastor there who in His preaching will refer to what our attitudes and actions should be vis-à-vis the government and culture, as part of our privileges and responsibilities as Christians and as citizens. My friend asked me what I thought about this.

He himself was not sure, but tended to disapprove. He thought we should stay away from that sort of thing and just focus on the gospel. I told him that this has always been my feeling as well. But in the context of China, I hesitated. In this unique culture, with its unique historical situation and rapidly changing social circumstances, perhaps what this pastor is exhorting is not inappropriate, as long as it is done humbly, respectfully, and in good taste. But then I thought if so for China, then why not for America? Shouldn't I be more consistent? How can I say that it is alright for the church in China, but not for the church in the U.S.? So then I found myself saying to him, "Maybe I should adjust my position about this a little. Let me put it this way---perhaps it is appropriate for us to encourage cultural awareness and action in church sometimes---*but only as long as we always come back to the gospel!* We have to *bring it back to the gospel* every time!" Because ultimately it is the gospel, not political or economic reform, not political action, not political parties, not legislation or law, that changes people's hearts. ☞



It's a Matter of Choice

Pastor Peter Ho

☞ Life offers us many choices, and we have a right to choose, don't we? It certainly seems so. Unfortunately, in exercising that right, we often choose unwisely. We thought we were adept at sifting through life's choices, yet we often step on landmines unknowingly. The landmine metaphor points out that the consequences of our choices often negatively impact not only us who are responsible for the choices we make, but also those surrounding us who may not be aware of what we did. Of course, there are times when we also make so-called "smart choices," but on what ground are these choices considered "smart"?

Recently, a TV drama features the main star as a single mother who was diagnosed with abnormality in her uterus that needed to be removed entirely. However, before the procedure was done, she wanted to maintain her right to be a mother, so she chose to conceive by means of a donated sperm from a sperm bank. She

would later tell her daughter that her father was a “tube daddy,” as if she came from a different planet.

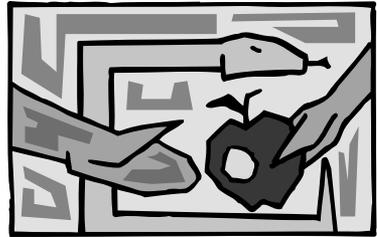
Even though the plot above comes from a TV drama, it is not totally imaginary. In the October 27, 2014 edition of the *Time* magazine, already there was an article on “egg freezing,” not referring to the kind of egg we consume for breakfast. This is a new option made available to single and aging women who are worried that they might not be able to find a partner in time to get pregnant. As the story goes, it is a process by which healthy eggs are surgically removed from a woman’s ovaries and stored in a lab until she is ready to get pregnant. When the time comes, the lab thaws the egg and the would-be mom begins the process of in vitro fertilization. This procedure allows women to build their careers and their personal lives on a timetable of their choice without being dictated by biology. Or, for that matter, without being pressured to get married in order to bear children.

Not too long from now, we can no longer take for granted that everybody has a father and a mother, because if “egg freezing” becomes commonplace – big companies such as Facebook, Apple, and Citigroup have already provided such benefit to their female employees – who needs a husband to bear a child? Not only are options available for women now when it comes to the timetable for giving birth, at the other end of the life spectrum also, we humans have increasingly had a say on when or how our life ends.

Recently, country-wide attention was turned to Brittany Maynard, a 29-year old lady in Portland, Oregon, an advocate for “death with dignity” who was diagnosed with brain cancer. Knowing that her terminal illness would bring her tremendous sufferings for weeks or even months, and not wanting her family to watch her nightmare, she decided that death with dignity was the best option for her and her family. It is a physician-assisted end-of-life option for mentally competent, terminally ill patients with a prognosis of six months or less to live. She wrote, “Who has the right to tell me that I don’t deserve this choice? That I deserve to suffer for weeks or months in tremendous amounts of physical and emotional pain? Why should anyone have the right to make that choice for me? I can’t imagine trying to rob anyone else of that choice.”

Just as pregnant mothers can choose the day of delivery through C-section, Maynard chose to end her life on November 1, 2014, after celebrating her husband's birthday on October 26, 2014 and not seeing her condition improve dramatically. Her decision immediately became a controversial ethical issue. On the one hand, people sympathize with the potential agonies she might have to undergo had she not passed on; on the other hand, others may still wonder how is the way she ended her life different from suicide, although she insisted that she was not suicidal because the life-ending medication had already been in her possession. Still others may take a neutral stance, maintaining that no one should pass judgment because we are not in her shoes.

Having choices in life is indeed a wonderful thing, and it is a God-given privilege. When God put Adam in the Garden of Eden, God said to him, *"You may surely eat of every tree of the garden"* (Genesis 2:16). There were certainly many species of tree in the garden, and we can imagine Adam and Eve walking through the garden trying to decide what to make for lunch. This is the natural and logical consequence of having choices. This is also the calling of life to exercise wisdom and obedience in making our choices.



At some point, Adam and Eve had probably tasted all the trees in the garden and grew tired of them. They had probably struggled for quite some time against eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of which God had specifically commanded Adam not to eat. When the serpent came to talk Eve into eating it, it was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. Genesis 3:6 describes for us what transpired within Eve at that crucial moment, *"So when 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, she took of its fruit and ate..."*

What went wrong could be easily glossed over. Before Eve took of the fruit and ate, a deliberation process took place: she saw the goodness of the tree, delighted in it, and desired it. In other words, she considered thoroughly the appropriateness of the fruit

for food, but unfortunately, she didn't consider God's prohibition against eating it. She thought eating the fruit would make her wiser than she already was, or even as smart as God, because she did not think God made her wise enough and she could somehow help God perfect his creation. She judged the appropriateness of the fruit for food autonomously and independently of God. Instead of obeying God's wise command and being wise through obedience, she did what was right in her own eyes.

In our world today, we are also blessed with so many choices. Just think of the moment you stand before your wardrobe in the morning to pick the clothes of the day. Have you ever had a hard time deciding? Well, whatever you choose, it is very likely to be inconsequential. It will not affect your career or your day, provided you wear something decent. It is totally different, however, if you choose to freeze your eggs, or set a date when you will pass on from this world into "whatever's next," as Maynard put it.

For a single lady to freeze her eggs when she is young is not necessarily wrong, if it is to guard against the sharp decline of fertility if she marries late. However, if it is to conceive even when she is not married, then the idea has deviated from the purpose of child-bearing, which is to take place within the context of marriage rather than to raise the child as a single-parent. As for setting a date of departure into the world to come to avoid suffering, it may be warranted in cases such as unplugging a breathing machine, but not through taking life-ending medications. The agonies of such disease may be great, but we do well to learn from Paul, who was given a thorn in the flesh and pleaded with the Lord three times for the thorn to leave him, but eventually he found peace in God's sufficient grace (2 Corinthians 12:7-9).

Joshua reminds us what we choose is ultimately what our heart worships, *"And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD"* (Joshua 24:15). Do we worship God or our freedom to choose? ☹

Give Thanks to God

Minister David Doty

☞ On November 23, Pastor Ho preached an excellent sermon from Romans 1 about Paul's giving thanks to God, through Jesus Christ, for all of the believers in Rome. Paul gave thanks to God through Jesus Christ, because it is only through Jesus that God hears and responds to the prayers of believers. Only believers. God hears our prayers and our thanksgiving because we have entered into a new, eternal covenant-relationship with God through our faith in our Mediator, Jesus Christ.

Pastor Ho also explained that faith is the work of the Holy Spirit. True faith in Jesus Christ is not the result of our decision to believe, but you and I believe, if we do, and choose to worship Jesus Christ in all that we do, because the Holy Spirit works faith in you and me. This is undeserved grace from God. So that is why Paul gives thanks for the believers in Rome in the beginning of his letter to them, because their faith is God's doing, God's work.

Following the combined service of worship on the twenty-third was the baptism service. Five brothers and sisters were baptized. In seeking baptism, these five professed their faith in Christ. They professed faith, which is God's doing, God's work.

You and I at RCCC have reason to give thanks to God. With all that's wrong with the world, it is easy to grow bitter and cynical. You may be facing hardships in your own life. Whether there is trouble in your workplace, or trouble in your home. You might be experiencing trouble with your health or trouble with your finances. God alone might understand the ways in which you are suffering today. And yet, despite all that is wrong and broken in our world or our own lives, we still have reason to give thanks to God.

First, the fact that our hardships are hard and unpleasant points us to the fact the world is not the way it is supposed to be. God did not make the world with suffering, cruelty, and hardships in the beginning. But thank God that he is good and his original creation was good. When life goes well, we might have moments to imagine what life was once like before the fall of mankind. But

thank God for a wonderful creation and all the goodness of that creation God enables for us to still enjoy.

Second, thank God that he is good and is doing something about the world in all of its sin and brokenness. In Jesus Christ, God is redeeming his people and restoring his creation. We might not be able to perceive or see this reality every day, but a baptism service gives us a glimpse and a reminder. And hope. For our hope in Jesus Christ is our confident anticipation of reigning with him in the age to come and the world restored, purged of all sin and evil. Such is too wonderful for anyone to imagine. Sometimes it seems a long way off, however.

Therefore, third, thank God that he is at work even in our own particular church and congregations. No church is perfect, of course. At times you might feel disappointed, discouraged, sad or angry about the way some things are, whether among believers in general or people in our own church. But the baptism service this past Sunday reminds us not only of our own baptisms, how God has worked faith into our own hearts, but also of the fact that God is still at work among us at RCCC.

1 Timothy 4:4 says, *“Everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.”* Let us receive all good things from our loving heavenly Father with thanksgiving. Let us also continue to trust God's Spirit to lead us as a church in the coming new year and receive his leading with thanksgiving.✠



The Messianic Meaning of Passover

Eliot Katz

✠ Some of the most poignant interconnections of the Old Testament and the New Testament are in the holiday of Passover. For all Jews, the Passover celebration is a retelling of the miracles through which the Hebrew people were set free over 3,500 years ago from bondage in Egypt. For Messianic Jews, or Jewish believers, the Passover points to Yeshua, the

Hebrew name for Jesus, as the Passover lamb and the true Messiah.

The instructions for the first Passover come from Exodus Chapter 12. Precise instructions are given for protecting Hebrew households from the 10th plague, the slaying of the first born males in Egypt. The instructions are to select and to sacrifice an unblemished male lamb, to paint some of the blood of the lamb on the door posts of the house, to roast the rest of the lamb and to eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The Lord's judgment of death of the first born will pass over the houses where the Lord sees the blood of the lamb.

The very same Chapter 12 of Exodus contains the commandment to observe the feast of Passover as a memorial for generations. In Leviticus Chapter 23 there is an explicit command to observe the Lord's Passover (Leviticus 23:5). The celebration of Passover is through the Seder dinner during which the story of the Exodus from Egypt is retold. The word Hebrew word Seder (pronounced SAY-der) means 'order' because the retelling of the story is to be done in a certain sequence and in a tactile way with eating of symbolic foods. In this way, each person can experience the story of the Exodus as though they themselves had been led from bondage to freedom.

The Seder plate contains three pieces of unleavened bread, the matzah, and these are wrapped in a cloth. The middle matzah is broken in half, and one half gets wrapped in a cloth and then set aside to be hidden and then searched for after dinner by the children. The other half gets broken and is shared by the people at the table.

The breaking of the matzah has multiple levels of symbolic significance. The significance of the breaking of the matzah as a symbol of Yeshua as redeemer and Messiah is found in the words of the prophet Isaiah:

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5).

The broken matzah, which is pierced and striped, is not only a reminder of the Exodus from Egypt, but it is a symbol of the Messiah who was bruised, pierced, and broken in an atoning

sacrifice as an act of redemption. There are multiple levels of symbolism in the matzah that is wrapped in a cloth and hidden, and later searched for to win a prize after the Seder dinner. Yeshua was wrapped in a cloth after being crucified, the body was hidden in a cave, and later persons who searched found a prize of salvation.



The Messianic significance of the Passover was articulated at the Last Supper which was a Seder dinner. The Seder dinner calls for pouring four cups of wine or grape juice in a particular sequence, two before the meal and two after the meal. The third cup is called the *Cup of Redemption*. At the Last Supper,

Yeshua or Jesus is quoted as saying that *“This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you”* (Luke 22:20). This symbolizes the connection between the blood of the Pascal lamb and Yeshua or Jesus as the unblemished Lamb of God who redeems mankind. The symbolic connection was explicitly stated when John the Baptist announces at the beginning of Yeshua’s ministry: *“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”* (John 1:29)!

The symbolism of the *Cup of Redemption* which is shared at the Seder is that just as the blood of the lamb brought salvation from a state of bondage in Egypt, the sacrifice of Yeshua as the Lamb of God brings salvation from sin for those who accept him as Messiah.

The Passover Seder includes sharing a fourth cup of wine or grape juice called the *Cup of Acceptance* or *Praise*. At the Last Supper, Yeshua is quoted as saying that *“I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom”* (Matthew 26:29).

The Passover celebration is a reminder of the Lord’s promise that *“I will redeem you with an outstretched arm . . . I will take you as my own people and I will be your God”* (Exodus 6:6, 6:7). There is a reminder of the fulfillment of this promise in Deuteronomy where Moses reminds the children of Israel that, *“the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm...”* (Deuteronomy 26:8). The Messianic

significance is that the salvation work of Yeshua was done on the cross with outstretched arms.

The Last Supper was a Passover Seder, and for Messianic Jews, the Passover celebration is more than the retelling of the Exodus from Egypt. It is also the celebration of the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies of a Messiah through the atoning sacrifice of Yeshua as the Lamb of God. ☩

Reflections from East Asia

Sammy Lee

☩ This past summer, I was supported by this church to go on a six-week long mission trip to East Asia with Cru (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ). During those six weeks we spent our time on a university campus, where we shared the gospel with national students and subsequently linked them up with long-term friends to continue discipleship. Our team comprised of seventeen students and four staff members from different universities in the Northeast, and we studied the Bible together, prayed together, and rejoiced over new believers together.

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. ² He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. ⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." ⁵ Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." ⁶ When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. ⁷ So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" ⁹ For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, ¹⁰ and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." ¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him. (Luke 5:1-11, NIV)

After reaching the halfway point of my time spent in East Asia I reflected on this passage in Luke 5. Honestly, before going into this trip I had no idea what to expect; if developing relationships with national students would be easy or if having spiritual conversations would be difficult. Although, most of the team, myself included, went into the trip very motivated and with a lot of ideas on how to best reach out and evangelize to students we met. I remember the initial days where it seemed like I was running on adrenaline, making many new friends on campus and finding the right opportunities to weave in spiritual topics in conversations.

However the energy and motivation of those initial days did not last forever as I found myself mentally and physically exhausted from conversations and building these friendships. I felt like Simon Peter; wearied and discouraged when you are pouring yourself into something when you are not seeing immediate results.

Yet it brought me to my knees before God, depending on Him more, praying for his strength as I invested myself in the lives of others so that they would know Christ's name.

God truly revealed himself to me as I gained a better understanding of how He is sovereign and steadfast. I became close friends with a freshman girl named Vivian during my time on the campus. She did not have any beliefs herself, yet she told me that she thought life seemed empty without having something to believe in. In our subsequent times meeting up she was very open to hearing the gospel and learning more about who God is. It was so encouraging to engage her with the Bible and to see her grow in her understanding of grace and God's love. However she told me that she wasn't sure yet if she could believe in Jesus and just wanted to learn more about Christianity for herself. In some ways I felt so powerless because I felt so overwhelmed with the desire for her to know Christ. In our conversations I sometimes felt discouraged as I silently



pondered, *If only I just had a little bit more time here to spend with her, maybe she would come to know Christ.* Yet this encounter showed me just how much of the battle in East Asia is in the spiritual realm and how a lot of things are outside of our control. All we can do- in fact; all

we need to do- is continue to take steps of faith while trusting in God.

My experience in East Asia allowed me to realize that understanding God's sovereignty requires faith- trusting that God can accomplish his work there in East Asia when we ourselves cannot and trusting that he has the best plans for us even in the midst of difficulties. Also at the halfway point of the trip I thought about just how many people I was surrounded by, how many people I passed by around campus, how many people were in East Asia. I felt conflicted about the uncertainty of where my friends would end up after I left, conflicted about how many people we were not able to reach out to, and conflicted about the nation's future. Despite all these uncertainties, I found assurance in knowing that my labor in the Lord was not in vain because of God's sovereignty. It is crazy to think of how God uses sinful man in the proclaiming of his word. But nothing can undermine His plan and his purposes cannot fail.

Like Simon Peter, my eyes were opened to seeing the beauty in trusting in the Lord. Through the friendships I developed I got a precious glimpse into the work God is doing in peoples' lives in East Asia. Please continue to pray for East Asia and that the gospel would be proclaimed "to the ends of the earth." I praise God for all the work He is doing in this world and I am confident that one day it will be brought to completion. ☺



Summer Fun

Jakin Tang

☪ In this winter season I would like to bring some sunny thoughts back to mind. It has been almost 6 months since summer began this past year. Do you remember the best parts of your past summer? Was it a family vacation out of town? Or having the kids home off from school (maybe that was the worst part ☺)? Or maybe it was not having to go to school every day? Whatever it was I am sure it was both busy and memorable!

As many of you know I spent my past summer at Wildwood Summer Project 2014 (WWSP) and you may have heard me share a bit about it as well. I would like to take this opportunity to share more about my experience in Wildwood, NJ. To quickly recap, at WWSP '14 I, along with 30 other students from around the US, went to Wildwood, New Jersey for 10 weeks of this past summer. We lived together and found almost full time jobs either at McDonalds or at Morey's Piers (an amusement park on the boardwalk near the beach). Our mission was to 1. Treasure Jesus, and 2. Make Him known. We did this by evangelizing to the international students who were there for the summer doing work and travel programs, worshipping together as a body of about 40 (including staff) brothers and sisters in Christ, and living in constant community by sharing our 24 hour lives together.

I would consider WWSP '14 to be the best summer of my relatively short life. I think this was due to the fact that out of all the amazing people I was able to meet, we were sharing not only life together but also sharing the person of Jesus together. One of the most memorable times I remember from WWSP '14 was during an International Cafe which he held each Thursday to invite over international students to hang out in our backyard. I decided to walk a friend home and I asked another friend named Aslan if he would keep me company doing so. After dropping my other friend back at her place we began to walk back to my house. On the way we were making small talk when he asked me, "Jakin, what do you believe about God?" Aslan was a nominal Muslim from the Middle East and for the next 2 hours we were able to discuss and share contrasting and similar ideas about who God is, how he interacts with people, and what that means for us personally. I will never forget that night as I was falling asleep in my bed how it felt to be so grateful for how God had orchestrated our relationship between me and Aslan in such a way that the most natural conversation for us to have was the one about faith and life. I only wish that all my relationships with Christians or non-Christians would be at a point where that conversation is just as natural.

I think the best thing I can say about WWSP '14 is that for the 10 weeks I was there I was able to develop incredibly close relationships with dozens of people and more importantly I was able to dive deeper into my own relationship with Christ. I don't even have time to share with you how I have contacts around the

world where if I get the chance to visit someday I will be able to meet up with these new friends I made. Some of my international friends have been sending me Facebook messages and emails hoping to stay in contact and I try to keep them in prayer! I also have brothers and sisters here in the states that we keep in touch through Google Hangouts a few times a semester. One of them recently had a job interview we prayed for, one of them is having a tough time and had to take a break from university, and a couple of them were recently baptized. Through ups and downs we have become like a family together and I think this is a great glimpse into how a loving community is meant to be. We are not perfect nor always loving but we constantly remind each other through word and deed that there is One who is perfect and always loving that we must continue to follow in this life and into the life to come.

I would like to encourage anyone who wants to learn more about Summer Missions Projects (as they are now known as) to check out this website (<http://www.cru.org/opportunities/mission-trips/summer.html>) and consider going (if you are a college student) or supporting through prayer and finances in the future.✉

(The article below is from Shirley Lynn's oldest brother, Bill. At his request Shirley read it for him to everyone at their father's Memorial Service. Shirley would like to share it with you here, especially if you were not able to attend the service, and did not have the opportunity to hear it. May the Lord use these words from Bill's heart as an encouragement to you.)

Don't Miss the Big Picture

William Yau

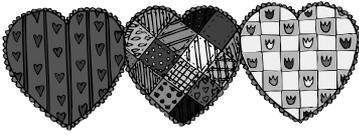
✞ As we each bid farewell to our dear father, I wish to convey my sincere gratitude to each and every one of you for your love, your prayer and thoughts during this time. Words are not possible to express our thanks to you for all you have done to our family in the past two weeks.

101 years may appear to be a very long time. In comparison to eternity, 101 becomes an insignificant number, so small that is not even worth mentioning. How many of us in our lives never dream of doing well, achieving and excelling in whatever

situation we are in, at school or at work. When we play a card game, we want to win. When we take a class, we want to be the top student. When we cook a meal, we want to receive applause from those who enjoy it. When we take a job, we want to perform well and be successful. A young student work hard to obtain a good score in SAT or ACT in hope of gaining entrance to a good university. In a few years, do you think that SAT score means much in helping this student getting into law or medical or graduate school? No, because it now faces a different set of requirement. Similarly, if you run a good race in your life, do you think you can call yourself an Olympian? No, unless you ran and won in the Olympics. You may toil and labor hard, but if you are focused on things that do not count, you are not going to get what you hope for.

In this life, you may be successful, may fight a good fight, or run a good race, but the crown of glory in Heaven may not be yours. The accolade from the master of “good and faithful” servant may not apply here. To put it in a Chinese phrase, describing how one frets about the wrong thing is to say in Cantonese “sesame seeds and mung beans” (芝麻綠豆) or “chicken feather and garlic skin” (雞毛蒜皮) as in Mandarin. Such a person has exhausted all the energy on the little stuff, so insignificant in the Kingdom of Heaven and totally missed the big picture, so to speak. Do you think it is wise for someone to spend time reading the preface and introduction of the textbook while preparing for the subject's final examination? One may say, I am not an ambitious person; all I know is the chicken feather and garlic skin in life. Do you remember the little kid who surrendered the 5 loafs and 2 fish in the feeding of the 5,000? Do you remember the poor widow who dropped the two little coins into the offering box at the temple?

In closing, let me tell a story about chicken feather. Once upon a time, in a small far away kingdom, there was this old king who was very well-liked by his people. One day the king stood at the balcony of his castle to address his beloved people. “My sons and daughters, this may be my last appearance to all of you as I am old and I am weak. My heart is failing and I do not have time to wait for a heart transplant.”



The people down below roared and wept and loudly chanted “Papa King, take my heart! Papa King, take my heart!”

“My dear children, I cannot take your heart.”

Again, louder and louder, “Papa King, take my heart! Papa King, here is my heart!” After a long pause, the King said “All I can use is just one heart.” Again and again, “Papa King, take my heart, Papa King, here is my heart!” The King was so touched, he said, “All I need is just one heart.” “Here is my heart! Here is my heart!” “Thank you very much,” said the King. “I will use a chicken feather to decide this. When I drop this feather, I will take the heart from the person whoever it lands next to.” As the chicken feather swings its way down in the light breeze into the crowd, the chanting suddenly changed from “Papa King, take my heart” – to an unexpected loud “*phoo!*” As the chicken feather is about to land on someone’s head, there was jumping up and down followed by everyone taking a deep breath and blowing, “*phoo, phoo, phoo*” and “*phoo!!*”....

Are you giving all of your best to the Master?

If anyone of you among us who have yet to know Christ or is still seeking and search the truth, I would strongly urge you to read a book by CS Lewis which is entitled, *Mere Christianity*. Read it carefully and thoroughly as if your life is depended on it like a huge final exam. I am talking about eternity or no eternity here. Read it at least three times and then make a judgment yourself. May the words uttered here be an encouragement and timely reminder for all of us, including myself. Thank you. ☺

Being Single

By Snow 白雪

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” Matthew 6:33 (NSAB)

☪ Once, a wise man asked his daughter about the character that she desires in a husband. She replied, “A Godly man, kind,

warm hearted and intelligent.” “Good,” her father said, “build these characters for yourself first.”

When I was single, I dated someone who brought me to the Lord, but I had so much doubt about him and finally I asked for God’s guidance in finding the truth as whether to marry him or not. The answer came loud and clear. After that, I devoted myself to the Lord with Bible study, prayer meetings and telling others the good news of Christ. I was like a hungry infant desiring pure milk. The more I got involved; more joy flowed out of me. I learned to forgive, serve and love others.

A sister in Christ advised me to pray for a godly husband. As I bowed down to pray, the Spirit led me to a different prayer, “Lead me not into temptation” and I knew this was God’s way to remind me that it was not the time for marriage; it was that my focus should steer clear from temptation.

God kept me pure for the next five years with his love and friendship. I was a joyful single woman who abided in HIS word, and service.

Then, I prayed for a godly husband. God showed me how a “Godly man” can fall so deep into deception and lust.

Finally, I prayed: *Lord, keep me single and pure if you think I can take this cup, or bring me someone whom I can bless and serve.*

Here he is, a gentleman, who makes me laugh and his sweet honesty touches my heart. It felt like that I had known him forever. He said that he had spent his lifetime waiting for me.

While I was single, I was truly blessed to spend the time waiting, to mature in Christ, and to prepare myself as a good wife in God’s eye. Now as a married woman, I am blessed with a beautiful family.

“There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1). ☩