

# MY TAKEAWAYS FROM CAMP 2011

by sister Dorothy Tay



What better takeaways can I have than the 3 Cs of **Communion**, **Community** and **Commission** of God?

On **Communion** with God, bro Jay Jarboe opened his lesson with a challenge, that as a follower of Jesus, how we can help others to be a follower. He told us to be silent, think and jot down how we want the Lord to help us. In this **communion with the Lord** my notes were: Lord, teach me to be more spiritually-minded; to seek your word and to seek your will. Teach me Lord, 'How to pray,' let me be empowered by the Holy Spirit. This is, I guess why we fared well with "**Passionate Spirituality**"

Jay then posed us a key question "What is your ultimate purpose in Life?" My thoughts switched to "**Inspiring Worship**." How can our worship be inspiring? To me worship begins with our desire for a communion with God, being engaged with God through our songs, praise and prayers. Having a right view of God puts me in a proper perspective. When God is glorified the church is moved towards unity, maturity, blessing, encouragement, and empowerment for ministry.

And so how can we be inspired? For me it is simply by the **Word of God**: God's grace and mercy, God's providence and God's bountiful blessings for us. All God's messages must go to point out God's love for us and God's command for us to love one another (John 13:34-35). This leads us to the **community** of "**One-another-ring**" and "**Deepening & Loving Relationship**." Here bro Jay challenged us to "serve one another, carry one another's burden, bear with one another, forgive one another, encourage one another, spur one another..." A tall order indeed! Do it and you will experience a **Life Transformation!** (Rom 12:1-2, Acts 2:42-47)

The **Prayer Walk**, led by elder Beng Chuan, helped us to begin on a right note, to know another's need and to commit them to God. In the early morning walk I befriended Wang Hwa from Malaysia who works with a Christian Organization in the organizing of training seminars and courses for preachers and Christian workers. We prayed for God's leading that she comes to find God through her attendance at camp. With Tik we prayed for God's strength and discernment in helping her to bring her elder boy back to God. And in the final stretch, Stephanie Yap walked and talked with me, confiding in me. I enjoyed getting to know this young and Godly-minded lady. We then prayed for a closer walk with God as Stephanie embarked on her new career in dentistry and that God will use us as an influence to our friends and loved

ones that they will come to know God. For all who were in the Prayer Walk, I am sure your experiences were glorifying to God.

The **Application Activity 1** led by Elder Adrian, beside the fun element of being the squirrel and tree, scampering and prancing around at the call of "Fire, Hunter and Tsunami," helped us to look at our frailty and interdependence. It is all about "Not Just Me" but about being "Partners in a Team." In the "One-Anothering Conversations" activity, moving on the outer circle, stopping at the fifth person, led me to people I hardly had conversations with. It gave us a chance to at least know each other better! Although Elder Adrian had a tough time controlling the "inattentive and restless crowd," his "**passionate leadership**" won the day!

Our **Room Devotions** were also opportunities for **community building**. I was in Deacon Swee Aun's group. I truly respect his gentle but assertive leading. I also got to know his family better, particularly his children John and Christine! I got to know that John is currently schooling at Commonwealth Secondary School, my last school of posting! I also got to know the Ting family: Yen Peng and Ann Loo, and daughters Yang Ling and Yang Gin. Among them, they had an appreciative competition, each telling the goodness of the other. In our skit on "**Holistic Small Groups**," many stars were born, namely our Mr Bean, our Macho Men and Amazon Women, the happy joggers and loving couples in the park, and the Holy Care Team! It was a joy that all responded so heartily. To all other skit performers, you really were amazing actors and actresses. I've not laughed so much for a long time!

One outstanding performer is our Blue Bus Captain Teck Su who was our affectionate "Ah Boy" all the way home! Together with Chin Soon, they showed their leadership and care for us all the way. We truly applaud all our Bus Captains for their "**Strong Servant Leadership**."

The 2011 Durian Feast was the Best out of the 7 camps I have attended! Well ordered, well organized, well spaced out and most gentlemanly consumed! This is all due to "**Effective Planning**." My experience was a heartfelt one as I was invited by Michael and Grace Choo to join them as they had the best bitter-sweet durian with them! My long-standing relationship with Michael and Grace Choo was right from the Bible Class days at Tanglin Halt! It is great being a Bible-class teacher and to "**Disciple**" another!

The next challenge raised by bro Jay was, "What is the number one purpose of the Church?" In Matt 28:19-20 is Our **Great Commission**: Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of age. We need to model after Jesus, who, by the nature of God, is a **Missionary!** (John 3:16)

“The fruit of a disciple is another disciple!” How can we disciple another? The answer is through the “**Gift-Oriented Ministry.**” (Eph 4:7-12) What gifts do we have? Rom 12:6 tells us “We have different gifts according to the grace given us,” be it to prophesy, to serve, to teach, to encourage, to give generously, to lead, to govern, and to show mercy. Which gift do you have? Use it for the glory of God!

Elder Simon in his Devotion on “**Need-Oriented Evangelism**” named several members who were models of evangelists, thinking he was not one who had that gift! God then showed him that he had the gift of evangelizing through the “**World Café on Missions.**” The exhibits put up by our overseas participants were commendable. There were stalls by the Missions Resource Network and by brethren from Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, India, China, Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand. They displayed their work for the Lord through photos, pamphlets, presentations and even hi-technology of video screening!

As I walked into the World Café I saw elder Simon, moving around surreptitiously, milling and musing around the cafes, to see if we had gathered anything! At mid-way round the World Café, he tactfully approached me and asked if I needed help, seeing me as a “lost tourist,” he could show me the way! I brushed him aside and replied, “No, I can find my way around!” And so I completed my world tour in good time! I then thought, “Where is our Singapore Café?” and saw elder Simon still “searching for one to tell His-Story.” This time I obliged.

Simon sat me down and took off his **beaded-bangle fish!** I recognized it as I had bought several at the AMF at Bohol last year. But none of mine was coloured like his: black at the head, red for divider, white for body, green for tail and yellow to close the tail! He then began to preach the **Good News** through the fish, of how Jesus fed the five thousand with 5 loaves and 2 fish. (John 6:1-15) He spoke on how the world is in darkness, (Black) and how Jesus shed His blood to wash our sins (Red) so that we can be pure as wool. (White) Having been cleansed, we are to grow in maturity and bear fruit as a Christian (Green) and look forward to eternal life in heaven. (Yellow for gold) What a way to **evangelize!** I was “bought-in” by his fish-tale! We then moved to tell others at the World Café! Elder Simon realized he had the **gift to evangelize!** We too can tell the “Good News” story at the market place! Can we be like Isaiah that when God called, as the harvest is plentiful and the labourers few, say, “Lord, here am I, send me!” Isa 6:8 Can we be **Need-Oriented Evangelists for Jesus?**

Where do we go from here? What will our **Action Plan** look like? We must plan for a **God-Directed Ministry**, with Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life. (John 14:6) Jay then gave us the 3-steps to go from here. Firstly, learn to live in **Praise of God**, Psa 96 advocates that we “Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.” Secondly, focus on **Transformational Prayer**. In Phil 1

Paul's prayer is for the people, that their love may abound more and more... Thirdly, seek to live in the **Presence of Christ**. In John 15:5 Jesus said, "I am the vine and you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." We are the branches, are we good for burning or bearing? The result of a God-Directed Ministry is **Bearing Fruit**: Fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) and Souls added to the Kingdom (Rom1:13).

In the **Marshmallow Challenge** Application Activity 2, the youth took centre stage. They led us, in groups of five to build the tallest free-standing structure in 18 minutes with 20 sticks of spaghetti, one yard of masking tape, one yard of string, and one marshmallow which needs to be on top. All groups worked zealously to build their tower. The master minds designed the plan and the team got down to build the structure. The tallest tower was built by the youths! In the debriefing, elder Adrian pointed out that studies have shown that children excelled in building the tallest tower and the adults the lowest. The children had worked around the marshmallow as they went along, whereas the adults concentrated on their structures and left the marshmallow till the end. **If Jesus were the marshmallow**, where then is our focus or the lack of it?

These are my takeaways from the camp, but the greatest touching takeaway is the sight of bro Seah Ke Howe lovingly wheeling his mother in and out of the conference room, in and out of the dining room, in and out of shopping centers, and helping her up and down the bus. I am deeply touched by his love and honour for his mother. By his side is wife, Bee Kin, my **Manito** who cheered me greatly by giving me "kudos" for being in the Filipino ministry! God is praised by all **Biblically and Spiritually Committed Members**.

The camp closed with **rededications** by many with humble and contrite hearts. Jhun Ma and Babes (Philippines) were in Praise of God for His faithfulness in giving them their son Jed, and Steven Shee (Wangsa Maju) expressed his thankfulness to God for the support and partnership with PP and the success of the LST programme in drawing people to Christ. From PP, John Lim thanked God for the opportunity to testify God's leading through his trials to become a stronger and more discerning leader, Peng Liam thanked God for bringing him back to PP, to be more devoted to his family, and committed himself to greater service for the Lord, and elder Simon, through God's leading a realization and commitment that he can be and will be an evangelist for God! The elders prayed for them and all others who made their re-dedications.

The camp went like clockwork! Accolades to the Camp Committee led by Kelvin Koo. With such a strong "**Functional Structure**" we have returned enriched. Our Mission is to Exist to Bring Glory to God as we have been called as God's co-workers in His vineyard. (1Cor 3:6-9)

**Thank you for sharing us your blessings in Christ at the Family Camp. The camp was full of blessings... overflowing our hearts with God's Spirit, forming in us the image of Christ and giving us encouragement to seek out & fulfill the purpose of His calling.**

**Honestly, we are at a crossroad of Christian life, where we desire to seek out God's perfect will for our family & the generations to come. We offer ourselves completely to the ministry of the Word & would want to dedicate our whole life to Him. Our prayer is for God to show us His will, whether to go fulltime; giving up on our business, and relying on God's sustenance or to continue with what we gained from the world; although too dangerous for compromise...**

**AT the camp, we found most of God's answers to our prayers and the puzzle of our calling is finding its way to completion... Thank you so much dearest brethren, your influence in our Christian life has so much anchored us in our faith to the Lord.**

**As I have mentioned, we are so blessed with your influence and not only Janet & I but my children for which I am eternally grateful... Actually Janet & I made a gamble for our kids, we never had a summer vacation together & the only vacation we planed was at the Family Camp and during their 2nd week of school days. We were worried for sacrificing their studies but from the words of my eldest son Nathaniel during our last room devotional, he said:" My father bullied us to attend the camp and ...it was worth it". Hearing this from my son and seeing their new glow, their interest in the Lord's work, the lessons learned at the camp & their testimonies of sacrificing their school days for spiritual matters, their friendships created with your Young Adults, their feeling of warmth & care, love & fellowship, value & importance, and church family... I guess our gamble was worth it & we praise God for you all.**

**Well, truly words are not enough to speak out our gratitude for sharing your blessings to us...but when we finally find God's answers to our prayers, it is but proper to gain the honor of prayers of rededication from you all to complete God's perfect will for my family.**

**You are always in our hearts...**

**With All Our Love & Prayers, the Ramos Family (JoJo, Janet, Nathaniel, JJ, and Angela & Rico) & our generations to come...**



Getting together with the PP church of Christ families during their 18th Annual church camp in Selangor, Malaysia helped us get to know God better and follow Him more closely. When we come into a relationship with God, we become a part of His family - the church. The PP coC as a family of God was a good example where we were taken care of by them and helped us be prepared to take on the challenges of everyday life. At the camp, seeing how other Christians fulfill their roles helped us understand our own role better. We learned to have love and compassion for people. Jay Jarboe from MRN talked about some ways to put together Communion, Community and Commission as we journey on to our spiritual growth. He motivated us to meditate on God's Words like in the book of John 13:35, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." As well as in John 15:5 which says, "... for without Me you can do nothing."

We were also grateful for the food, accommodation & transportation generously given us by the PP coC brethren like Peter & Moreen Lim who treated us to one of the finest restaurants in Singapore, to Peng Liam & Catherine & family for opening their home for us, to Olivia for driving us safely to wherever place we went & giving a treat to visit Marina Bay, to the YA (Irvin, Joseph, Xin Yi, Olivia, Geraldine, John, Christine, Amanda, Cheryl & Clarice & others) for taking delight to provide a sumptuous dinner at the Marche' Restaurant, to sis. Dorothy & the Filipinos who prepared a lunch on Sunday, to PP brethren like Caroline, Foon Yoong, Magdalene, Cheryl, Olivia, Mei Yin, Hong Ngee, Beng Chuan & Woon Ching, Henry & Nat, Swee Aun & Lai Fun, Edward & Rosalind, and others, who in their own special way showed their love for us by giving us goods & keepsakes, we thank you very much. Lastly, we would like to express our sincerest gratitude to PP coC for sponsoring us in the camp. Your generosity and hospitality will always be in our hearts. You all made a difference in our lives. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.



## Reflections from the Bible Camp 2011

By Lim Li Mei

One week after the conclusion of the bible camp, our Care Team met, as is our usual practice, to discuss lessons learnt from the time spent from 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June at Saujana Subang Hotel in Selangor, Malaysia. The following are some thoughts raised by members of the group:

### 1. The struggles of our church brethren

The rededication of some members on the final night of the camp revealed the difficulties encountered by some church brethren that many of us were unaware of. Listening to Bro Steven Shee's appreciation of the aid rendered by the Pasir Panjang Church of Christ for the work at Wangsa Maju, Malaysia, and the earlier plea by his wife Eileen (during the afternoon's World's Café on Missions) for more help in the Let's Start Talking programme at the nearby universities made us realise that doing the Lord's work can be a very challenging task. Once a commitment has been made to start the work in a certain field, there is the obligation to carry on the work successfully. Over the past six years, the members of the Wangsa Maju church have been faithfully reaching out to the undergraduates to fulfil the great commission through the teaching of English. While the harvest is plenty, the labourers are few and so they solicit the help of members in visiting them and assisting with the English programme, even if it is for a short period. The very presence of members from elsewhere will be a great source of encouragement for the few families involved in the work.

This brings to mind Peter Lim's lesson during the Prayer Walk that all 3 elements of Communion, Community and Commission must be present for the church to transform and grow. If the church at Wangsa Maju only had Communion with God and spent much time fulfilling the great Commission, they may possibly experience burn-out and discouragement if they do not have the support of other members of the Christian Community during the long protracted period of involvement. For this reason, Jhun Ma and Babes from Tuao, Philippines and the other brethren from Myanmar, India, Vietnam and China also require assistance from us to sustain them in their arduous work. The idea is not to create reliance but to let the committed workers know they are not alone in their struggles. Hence there is a need for our involvement in the various Mission Interest Groups (MIGs).

### 2. Marshmallow Challenge

Quite a few lessons were drawn from this hands-on activity which required teams to build the tallest free-standing structure out of 20 sticks of spaghetti, one yard of masking tape, one yard of string and one marshmallow.

We learnt that everyone has a part to play in the building of the structure. We should begin with the end in mind and ensure there is a strong foundation. Groups that succeeded in the challenge started with the marshmallow first and built a structure that would support the weight. Similarly, for the church to be strong and succeed, we need to start with God, and ensure that the church practices, action plans, priorities, vision, values and mission are in alignment with His will. There should be a solid foundation and we should anchor our faith in God and not men.

In building the structure, we were desperately trying to strengthen the joints to prevent the collapse of the pyramid. Similarly, in a church, we must know where the weaknesses of the church are and reinforce them to ensure their sturdiness.

One member mentioned that her original intention to create a solid square base comprising four spaghetti sticks was overruled by another who felt a triangle should be sufficient. Eventually the structure did not stand as the support was not strong enough. In hindsight, she felt she should have insisted on what she felt was right. The lesson drawn from this is that, sometimes there may be criticisms about the practices of the church (e.g. we do not use instrumental music), but we should stand firm in our belief and hold fast to our faith, never wavering, if that is according to the teachings of the Bible.

So many other good lessons were gleaned from the camp but we have chosen to only mention two in this article. We would like to thank the Camp Director and the rest of the team for the great job done in organising such a beneficial camp. Many thanks to Bro Jay Jabore, the trainers and facilitators, as well as all others involved, in providing us the spiritual feast.