



**2020 Year Theme: Be Strong and Courageous! Joshua 1:9**

**Theme: The 10th Plague and the Passover - Signs & Symbols**

**Today's scripture texts: Ex 12:1-14; Rom 13:8-14; Ps 149**

Since the general elections, job retrenchment news has splashed across *The Straits Times*. What does that mean for the work force with increasing unemployment? Will the employment situation be much better by September? Who has been left behind in this pandemic year? What businesses have suffered in the unrest and the shifting of priorities? What provisions can your church community provide for those who are struggling financially? What word can you give for those whose livelihood has been affected? And how do we deal with the anger that still churns away underneath?

If there is an emotion that seems to resonate throughout the texts our worship series, it is anger. If there is an emotion that often will launch us into a wilderness experience, it is also anger. So, this seems to be where we need to begin. Let's be clear, however, this isn't a call for an experience of worship that stokes anger in the participants. This is not a rallying cry to tear down or rise or strike out. No, this is an opportunity for us first to acknowledge that all of us get angry. And that if we don't acknowledge that, then the wilderness becomes that much more difficult to navigate. This is not a therapy session; however, it can be the beginning of a healing process.

So, how might you deal with anger in worship this week? *First, it might be worth recognizing that there are things worth getting angry about.* The list of ongoing evil in our world is certainly a call for some anger. We share in God's anger for what is broken and abusive in our society and in our communities. Perhaps expressing our anger might enable our action in our communities. Let our prayers stir us to get angry at what angers God.

*Second, the Exodus experience is a call to risk a new life and to embrace change.* This is evident through the story of the Passover, and what the rituals, symbols and signs have come to represent. For the Israelites, these were important markers for the people both in the present and future.

For example, the meal itself. There is the sacrificial lamb, whose blood brings redemption and whose body provides sustenance. But there are the bitter herbs, reminders of the suffering already endured and the suffering yet to come. This transformation will not be pain free and will not be blood free. This is a part we tend to forget, or we want to forget. Without suffering, there is no transformation.

*Third, what shall we sing?* Are there songs of anger? Although Psalm 149 calls to mind a people with "high praises in their throats and two-edged swords in their hands," the Psalm text doesn't need to be a call to violence. In fact, to hear it as such goes against Christian understanding from the beginning of the faith. It does, however, instruct us to not cower before rulers who contravene the ordinances of God. We "attack" with righteousness and with a passion for God's truth, and we persist until God's glory is revealed in the world in which we live, not just the one we hope for.

*Finally, our anger needs to be transformed into a tool for service and transformation.* Are we willing to face the challenging issue of confronting evil? This is an inevitable result of our commitment to bringing God's rule into a visible witness to the people of our world.

Will we confront the evil within ourselves, in our communities and in the world? Will we overcome it with praising God and in living our lives filled with and expressing God's love? Let us take our instruction from Romans 13:12— Let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.

# EVENTS

## Online Bible Class & Worship

### **2 August**

9.30 am Bible Class  
The Parable of the Two Sons by Lee Hock

11.00 am Worship  
The 10th Plague and the Passover - Signs & Symbols by Vincent Lim

## Wed Online Bible Class 5 August

7.30 pm  
The Book of Psalms  
Teacher: Lim Cher Yam

## Zoom Prayer Warriors

8.00 pm  
Every 2nd & 4th Tue  
Lim Lian Chye



Use this QR code to access Online Worship



**RESUMPTION OF IN-PERSON CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP SERVICE CONTINUES TODAY. (UP TO 50 MEMBERS). MEMBERS WHO INTEND TO WORSHIP IN THE CHURCH PREMISES ON SUNDAY ARE TO REGISTER AND SUBMIT THE ONLINE FORM ON PPCOC WEBSITE EACH WEEK. MEMBERS MAY ALSO USE THE QR CODE ON PAGE 4 FOCUS NEWSLETTER.**

**YOU can join us in worship by going to [www.ppcoc.org](http://www.ppcoc.org) and click on our **Online Worship** under Resources tab or Quick Links. You can also check the **Donate** tab on how to make bank transfers to the church for tithes and offerings.**

## When Should You Confront a Fellow Christian's Sin? Part 1

By Jeremy Bacon

***This week we are challenged to confront evil – within ourselves, in our communities and in the world. So, I have decided to publish Jeremy's article in why and how we should confront sin in our fellow brethren. Jeremy is a divorced single dad who lives in Illinois with his three amazing children. He has a bachelors and masters in theology, which is not always the most useful at the retail job he's worked since 2006. – Beng Chuan***

When it comes to judging the sins of our fellow Christians, do we get a green light or red light from God?

We see plenty of verses in the rest of the New Testament that match Jesus' warning against judging in Matt. 7:1-6. (For more articles on Jesus' take on judging, see this, this, and this.) There are plenty of Scriptures telling us that judging is a bad idea. James says,

"Brothers and Sisters, do not slander one another. . . who are you to judge your neighbor?" (James 4:11-12).

Paul uses his rhetorical questions to say the same thing,

"You, then, why do you judge your brother and sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgement seat" (Rom. 14:10).

But we get mixed messages.

These two quotes specifically say not to judge fellow believers. Yet, in 1 Cor. 5:1-13, Paul says that he already has judged a problematic Corinthian believer (5:3), and then asks another rhetorical question:

"What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside?" (5:12).

The implied answer is, "Yes."

### **So, wait? Are we supposed to judge or not?**

Look at it this way: our actions as believers can exist on a "disobedience" spectrum. On one end of the spectrum, you have obvious acts of disobedience. Say, living in a sexual relationship with your stepmom (1 Cor. 5:1). Gross. On the other end of the spectrum, you have actions that are NOT obviously disobedient (and may not be disobedient at all). Say, eating meat that may or may not have been butchered in the process of worshipping an idol (Rom. 14:2).

On this end of the spectrum, things get real fuzzy. The issue is whether the practice violates a standard God has for his people. And it just isn't clear that it does. Paul's discussion of these "matters of conscience" indicates that, the farther someone is on this end of the spectrum (the more their actions are not obviously disobedient) the more we need to leave that call between them and God.

"Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand" (Rom. 14:4).

But on the other end of the spectrum, we are dealing with things that clearly do go against God's standard for his people.

Part of following Jesus means accepting him as Lord. He's the boss. He makes the rules. When we commit to following him, we are agreeing to be held accountable to the standard God has for his people.

So, in these matters of obvious disobedience, "Judge not lest you be judged" still works because we are fully aware that the measure we use is the same measure used against us. We all signed up for that.

If I end up in such a bad place that I'm obviously not walking with Christ, I hope some of my brothers and sisters would intervene!

Why? Why would I hope that? Why would we call out fellow believers on obvious acts of disobedience? In 1 Cor. 5:1-13 (the guy hooking up with his stepmom), this guy and his family have some serious issues going on. Left unchecked, those issues are going to bite them in some very nasty ways. They need an intervention. That is the loving thing to do.

But Paul's main concern is that this guy needs a spiritual intervention. Someone who accepts Christ, but then lives in blatant disobedience, is in a seriously dangerous spiritual place.

It's like the man got a "Jesus" inoculation. It's not strong enough to actually "take" and produce a life-change. But it's enough to make sure that the life-change never happens. Paul's response is radical: "Hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord" (5:5).

There is also a wider, communal concern. As the community of God, what role are we called to play? In ancient Israel, yeast was often taken as a metaphor for sin. The metaphor emphasizes its ability to spread. It doesn't stay in one corner of the dough, but defiles the whole thing. So the Passover feast, celebrating Israel's redemption, deliverance, and freedom was the beginning of the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread. All yeast was removed from the community. They were freed to be pure.

The people of God are a community that has been called to be holy. So Paul says,

"Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:7-8).

The call to Christ is a call to continuously grow in holiness, both individually and as a community. Sometimes, faithfulness to that call requires us to "judge those inside." This is all about church discipline. I'm mostly avoiding that language because "discipline" carries so many wrong connotations in our culture.

**I mention it here to point out that discipleship and discipline are cognate. If you want the one, you cannot avoid the other.**

But we do.

We have to recognize that, when it comes to this call to greater holiness, we simply aren't doing it. We Protestant Evangelicals may look down on the Catholic practice of confession for all the ways it can become mechanical, routine, lifeless. But we aren't even asking our people to do *that*.

We just ask them to warm a pew for an hour or so every week while we make sure they know that Jesus loves them as they are, and maybe try to sell them on the features and benefits of Jesus. ("Hey, did you know that Jesus can help you manage your finances?") Meanwhile, nearly every young single in the audience is sexually active, and 2/3 of the men can probably remember the last porn they watched. And that's just one issue on Paul's list (1 Cor. 5:11).

**The "accountability" movement was a gesture in the right direction, but it seems to have fizzled.**

We had too hard a time figuring out how to do it right. And that's the million-dollar question, isn't it? What should this "prodding to greater holiness" look like? What's the format, the venue, the participants? How, exactly, should it work? As a non-practitioner, I feel bad even bringing up the question. I can't answer it. It may take a full-blown movement in the church to develop an answer.

But we can't find the answer if we're avoiding the question.  
(*To be continued...*)

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### ***Nuggets by Lee Hock***

Godly sorrow is our sadness for offending God. It leads to changing one's wicked ways & be reconciled with God. Sadness over earthly troubles leads to stress, shame & guilt. God is able to use our sadness over offending Him to help us become stronger spiritually. Relying on God, we can find the strength to overcome our worldly troubles. Godly sorrow brings hope, peace & love into our live. We will discuss this more on Sunday.



## Psalm 84:1-4

1. Hear, O Lord, and answer me  
for I am poor and needy
2. Guard my life, for I am devoted to you.  
You are my God ; save your servant  
Who trusts in you
3. Have mercy on me, O Lord,  
For I call on you all day long
4. Bring joy to your servant,  
For to you , O Lord,  
I lift up my soul



## Prayer Requests

- Uphold prayer for **Janet Gant** for God's favour for recovery from kidney stones removal surgery and wellness completely.
- Uphold prayer for **William Wong** to recover well from a fall. Pray for God's favours for William to get well completely.
- Pray for our young, new parents in the upbringing of their children. **Chen Yi & Eunice's** baby **Hosanna**, **Daniel Ong & Hwee Ying's** baby **Ethan**, **Johnston & Josephine Seah's** baby **Gabriel**.
- Two SIBI graduate students - **Kim and Bles** have return to their respective countries. Continues to pray for **Marc and Esther** as they wait for an available flight ticket to return home.

## Upcoming Baptisms on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August

- **Manuevo Grace Seguinte**, helper of Sarah Yu and Frederick Yu
- **Myan Cris Cabanting Fronza**, helper of Tony Zhang and Nancy Zhang

ACTS Prayer

Adoration - Praise God for who He is. Psalm 48:1

Confession - Confess your sins to God. 1 John 1:9

Thanksgiving - Thank God for what He has done. 1 Thes. 5:18

Supplication - Request God's help for yourself and others. Phil 4:6-7

[www.womensministrytoolbox.com](http://www.womensministrytoolbox.com)

**NOTHING PROVES THAT YOU LOVE SOMEONE MORE THAN MENTIONING THEM IN YOUR PRAYERS.**

## SUNDAY GIVING

FACTS  FIGURES

26 July - \$11,103.30

## WAYS TO GIVE

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1. Scan the QR code using your mobile banking app
2. Verify that it shows:  
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Members who intend to worship at the church premises on Sunday are to register and submit the online form each week. <http://bit.ly/2Wk8Qg8>

Scan the QR code to submit the registration successfully.



FEEDBACK on Church Matters



<http://bit.ly/38KH8wK>

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