



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

Theme: Passage through the Sea – On the Brink of Disaster
Today's scripture texts: Ex 14:19-31; Rom 14:1-12; Ex 15:1-11



Picture by Dennis Jones

This morning's sermon comes with a tagline, which reads, "Passage of the Sea: On the Brink of Disaster." Several things were going on in the trip through the sea. Israel was given the right to be able to pass through on dry ground; God had chosen Israel to be his people. Nothing was able to get in the way of this appointment—not Pharaoh, not an assault on the rear and finally, not even a natural obstacle.

This is not to say that a passage with God is a piece of cake. On the contrary, the Israelites had to prove themselves worthy of relationship with God as they would soon discover in the wilderness. This walk through the sea marked a transitional period in their lives; it was not always a simple and painless process. The Israelite army was caught in what Victor Turner would call a liminal state: a situation in which one stands between what is dead or no longer of any value and what is not yet born (or unknown). This is a fearful place to be. Yet it was the will of God that the Israelites should be spared and given the chance to prove themselves true to relationship. God had heard their cries and sent Moses to bring them to the Holy Mountain. It was a great (and gracious!) work. The people were in awe of God's grace and believed in the Lord and his servant Moses. So grateful were they that Moses led them in singing a song to the Lord (Exod. 15:1). Just like Moses and the Israelites, let us be thankful and grateful for the freedom in Christ.

As the Israelites anticipate their future, they are afraid. Their relationship with one another and God will be tested. Similarly, we will be tested as we go through the spiritual journey and experience struggles with God and His people some time. Thereby let us consider how Paul (Romans) exhorts us to follow Christ in the everyday terms of our relationships with one another especially not to judge those who express their faith and live out the daily ramifications of faith differently from us.

Meanwhile let us celebrate our victory and freedom in Christ just like how like how Moses sang the song of victory after the Israelites were being free.

EVENTS

Online Bible Class & Worship

9 August

9.30 am Bible Class
The Parable of the Wedding Feast by Lim Lian Chye

11.00 am Worship
Passage through the Sea by Foo Yong Wee

Wed Online Bible Class **12 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 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 2
by Jeremy Bacon

This week we continue with Jeremy's article in why and how we should confront sin in our fellow brethren. – Part 2.

Jeremy is a divorced single dad who lives in Illinois with his three amazing children. He has a bachelor's and master's in theology, which is not always the most useful at the retail job he's worked since 2006. – Beng Chuan

We need to figure out how to love our fellow Christians enough to confront their sin.

Yet we avoid the question. Why? Why are we reluctant to intervene with fellow believers engaged in obvious disobedience?

First, perhaps we're afraid of their spiritual immaturity.

As we've looked at in-depth, people do not naturally respond well to being corrected. Yet Proverbs holds out the "wise person" who can respond well.

"Do not rebuke mockers or they will hate you; rebuke the wise and they will love you. Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning" (Prov. 9:8-9).

Again, we've mentioned before that Christianity provides the exact resources (grace and forgiveness) to help us face our faults. Yes, we have to gauge what an individual is ready to handle, but if they're never ready, something is seriously wrong.

Obedience is the single greatest way to know Jesus better.

Second, perhaps we're afraid of our spiritual immaturity.

This is a perfectly rational fear.

"Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

Perhaps we'll be tempted by the same sin as that person, or by the lingering temptation of judgmentalism itself. If Jesus is always driving at attitudes, then attitude is key. Attitude is what makes the difference between harmful judgmentalism and a life-saving intervention.

So Paul emphasises restoring them gently.

Also, many of these "intervention" passages imply or clearly state that it should be done in groups (Mt. 18:15-17). While this is based in the Jewish legal tradition (Deut. 19:15), there's also some practical wisdom here. If other people also see a need for an intervention, then it's much less likely that I'm just venting my own neuroses.

Third, we're afraid of the mess.

The "mess" simply is the lack of clarity. Does this merit an intervention or not? Is this any of my business? What is the morally right thing to do here? What is the effective thing to do here? Often, none of that is clear.

We could get it wrong. Maybe we do the morally right thing in an ineffective way, and it just makes things worse. Or maybe we are morally out of line. We stand on the edge of this mess, this unclarity, the waters of chaos.

Remember, trying to walk across that water on your own is madness. Only the Holy Spirit can guide through that kind of thing. So Paul says, "You who live by the Spirit should restore that person" (Gal. 6:1). And when we fail, remember that's what grace is for.

Lastly, we're afraid of legalism.

Are we just going to be piling up rules on people? This is spiritually toxic in the extreme. Either they will (1) ignore the rules like a rebellious teenager ("it's too hard, so why even try?"), (2) think they are keeping the rules and thus become twice as much of a monster, or (3) settle somewhere in the middle, hoping they're "good enough" but living in constant (and correct) fear that they are not.

Those responses are unacceptable, so instead we slide into what Bonhoeffer calls "cheap grace." What do I have to do to be saved? "Nothing, absolutely nothing." What do I have to do to be right with God? "Nothing,

What is Christ calling me to? "Nothing, absolutely nothing."

When we ask, "What do I have to do to be right with God?" we get stuck on the dilemma between legalism and cheap grace.

That's because the question itself betrays us. It shows that we're approaching God on transactional terms. We're relating like we're in a marketplace making a business deal. How much does this thing cost, and who is going to pay for it? The tendency of nearly every religion to devolve into a rules-based system probably shows a universal tendency to relate to God in transactional terms.

But that's not how God relates to us. He literally stepped into our shoes. He got a house in the neighbourhood (Jn. 1:14). He wanted his followers to understand that they were his friends and he loved them (Jn. 15:9-15).

Jesus didn't relate to us in transactional, market, business terms. He related to us in social, personal terms. Because the point of all of this (seriously all of this) is to know him. Personally. According to Jesus, that literally is eternal life (Jn. 17:3).

So how do we know Jesus?

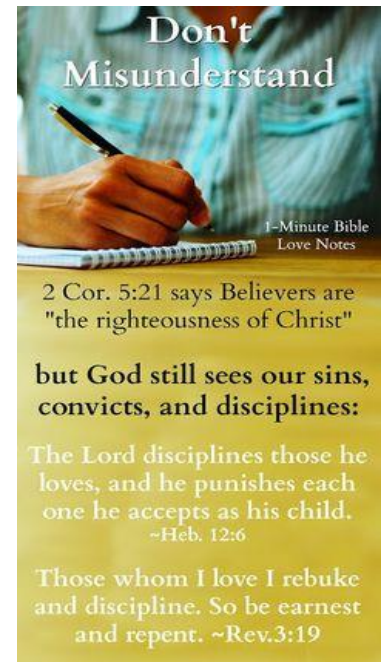
Please understand that the commands Jesus gives, all the imperatives in the Sermon on the Mount, are not arbitrary rules. They show us his heart. That is why obedience is the single greatest way to know Jesus better.

When we grow in holiness, we experience the heart of Jesus.

We come to know him through having shared life experience with him. He and we have spent time in the trenches together.

So how can it be healthy to "judge those inside?"

Only if we are the community of those who burn with a desire to know Jesus more.



What / Who is Truth (Ultimate Reality)?

TRUTH is the Triune (3-in-1) God and the Word of God.

How does Triune God & the Bible (Christianity) answer the great questions in life?

1. **Who am I?**
I am a creature of great value to God. He loves me and cares for me.
2. **Where did I come from?**
God created the first male & female and breathed into them their souls. I am their descendant from the various races after the Great Flood.
3. **Why am I here?**
To glorify God and to enjoy Him (Isa 43:7; Col 1:16; Psa 37:4; Phil 4:4)
We are to love Him, worship Him, serve Him, and fellowship with Him.
4. **Who decides Right from Wrong?**
God has given His laws for life and He will judge all our deeds on earth
5. **Where will I go after I die?**
Judgement based on our faith in God & life on earth – Heaven or Hell.

Living in a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) world where there is information overload from the internet, lots of fake news, false ideologies and distorted worldviews, how do we know what is the Truth?

Sister Catherine Leow shared a lesson on "What is Truth?" with the girls at Gladiolus Place last week. The Truth may not matter where it is a matter of opinion. But where it relates to Facts, Health, Justice, Morality and Eternity, the Truth clearly matters.

There are many questions in life that Science cannot answer with certainty or cannot answer at all e.g. Is there a God? Do I have a soul? Did the Big Bang happen? Did life evolved from a single bacteria cell? What happens after death? The girls are encouraged to investigate and weigh the evidence to those possible answers by various worldviews and seek for the Truth (the ultimate reality).

For Christians, our Triune God and His Word is the ultimate Truth (Jn 14:6, 8:32, 17:17) Big or small, lies are lies. Satan is the father of lies and half-truths and he is the ultimate source behind every false cult and false world religion. Truth is Truth even if no one believes it. A lie is a lie even if everyone believes it.

Our heartiest congratulations to **Michael Choo** on the arrival of his first grandchild **Elijah** to his eldest son **Gabriel Choo**.

We rejoice with the angels in heaven over the baptisms today, 9th August.

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

Pray for sisters **Maribel, Mildred, Karen and Ehpril** whose brother JR passed away prematurely on Friday 7 Aug 2020 from a heart condition. He is 37 and left behind his wife and 3 children. May God comfort the bereaved family who are still in shock.

City of Man, City of God by John Lim

Singapore celebrates her 55th birthday today. 'Tis the season for NDP songs on-repeat, fun packs, flash sales on Shoppee and Lazada and, perhaps my personal favourite, special KFC flavours.

Festivities aside, this is also a season for remembering and retelling the Singapore story. We celebrate how our nation banded together against all odds and rose like a phoenix from the ashes. We talk about the Singaporean "gung-ho" or "can-do" spirit where we can achieve whatever we put our minds and hearts to.

As our nation celebrates its story, it reminds me a lot about our Christian story, which I find worth celebrating much more. Ours is the story of a loving God who rescued his people from the clutches of slavery into his abundant and everlasting presence. The story of Christ Jesus who literally rose from the dead and conquered humanity's greatest enemy. The ongoing story of the Holy Spirit who dwells within each of us, who is even now restoring us to the perfect image of God.

At its best, the Singapore story is a shadow of the Gospel of Jesus. Our earthly home teaches us to yearn for our heavenly home, because everything that is now good will be infinitely better in that eternal kingdom, and everything bad and broken will be no more.

So as we wait to enter that heavenly abode, we do not stop caring about our world or our country. Rather, we care for this earthly realm as training to live in our heavenly home. God has not put us here by accident - surely he calls us even now to bless our neighbors and to claim this land for the kingdom of God.

So let's ask ourselves: how is God calling me to bless my neighbors during this season? How does my heavenly citizenship affect my earthly citizenship?



SUNDAY GIVING

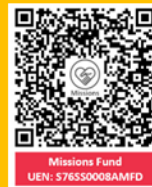
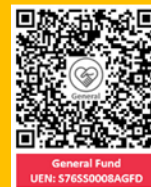
FACTS  FIGURES

2 August - \$12,107

WAYS TO GIVE

(C) Donate via PayNow (QRCode)

1. Scan the QR code using your mobile banking app
2. Verify that it shows:
Church of Christ PPG,
S76SS0008AGFD
3. Indicate your name in the "Reference No." (optional)
4. Enter the amount you wish to contribute
5. Click next, verify the details and confirm.



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>

Pledge & Building Fund Committee
Peter Lim
Jim Kawi
Grace Mariaraja

Elders
Simon Goh
Peter Lim
Lim Swee Aun
Terry Wan

Deacons
Dennis Law
Lim Kok Hin
Vincent Lim

Ministers
Patrick Ong 82005250
eMail: patrickong@ppcoc.org
Beng Chuan 96393008
eMail: tanbengchuan@ppcoc.org