

BETHANY

INDEPENDENT-
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

God's Kind of Church...

Where God is touching lives...

And people care for people.

Bethany IV ... 12 April 2020 ... Easter Sunday!

MICA (P) No.: 048/10/2019

MEDITATION

REV DR CHARLES TAN

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Text: 1 Peter 1

"JOY INEXPRESSIBLE AND FULL OF GLORY"

A JOYOUS EASTER

The Church Session and the Pastoral Team wish all who make up the Bethany IPC Family, in Singapore, India, Australia and Myanmar, a truly Joyous Easter! There is a

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MEDITATION

(Continued from page 1)

special joy that God has given that should never be lost!

THE GIFT OF JOY

It was the Lord Jesus who gave this wonderful gift of joy!

*These things I have spoken to you,
That My joy may remain in you,
And that your joy may be full. John 15:11*

1. This joy is related to:

- a) The Lord Jesus Christ
- b) To His teachings

2. The joy described

- a) My Joy
 - i) Jesus' kind of joy
 - ii) It was a joy that was deep and profound
- b) Special quality of Joy
 - i) Fullness of joy
 - ii) Abiding quality
(It is not dependent on external circumstances)

THE FRUIT OF JOY

Joy may also be described as a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

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MEDITATION

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But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy... Galatians 5:22

1. The Spirit of God cultivates Joy
2. The seed is in the teachings of Jesus
3. When carefully nurtured, the joy of the Spirit will become evident

AN APPRECIATION OF THIS JOY

The Apostle Peter described the joy of the Lord beautifully.

*Whom having not seen you love.
Though you do not see Him, yet believing,
You rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.*

1 Peter 1:8

1. This joy is related to love for the Lord Jesus Christ
 - a) We can love the Lord
 - b) We do not need to see the Lord physically to love Him
2. This joy is related to our faith
 - a) Through believing in Jesus we can find joy
 - b) The challenge is to have a genuine faith
3. The quality of this joy
 - a) It causes rejoicing

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MEDITATION

(Continued from page 3)

- b) It is a joy that cannot be fully explained
- c) It is a joy that may indeed be described as “full of glory”
 - i) There is an element of the divine
 - ii) There is an element of a special touch of God

EASTER JOY

This joy is related to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ!

1. Joy of seeing Jesus triumph over sin and Satan
2. Joy of being Jesus being triumphant over death
3. Joy of life eternal with the Lord Jesus for all eternity

May there be a special Joy in our hearts as we celebrate Easter Sunday!

Write to me at: charlestan@bethanyipc.sg

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONSECRATION OF THREE INTERN PASTORS

Three men would be consecrated as Intern-Pastors from Easter Sunday.

1. Moses Kwek
2. Eugene Seow
3. Simon Nagaraj

Their testimonies are included in today's Bethany Bulletin.



COVID-19

1. Stay Home Notice

Let us take this very seriously.

2. Church premises

The Church will not be open even to Church Pastoral Team or the Kindergarten Staff!

We are taking the matter of Covid-19 very seriously! We will do our part in complying with the stricter measures imposed by our Government!

3. Fervent Prayers

- a) For the many who are afflicted in different parts of the world
- b) For our Bethany IPC Family in Australia, India, Myanmar and Singapore



WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

Psalm 110:5-7

*⁵ The Lord is at Your right hand;
He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath.*

*⁶ He shall judge among the nations,
He shall fill the places with dead bodies,
He shall execute the heads of many countries.*

*⁷ He shall drink of the brook by the wayside;
Therefore He shall lift up the head.*

1. The LORD at our right hand

- a) He is right beside us
- b) He is there to uphold us

2. The LORD as Supreme Judge

- a) He has Divine authority
- b) He has the power to call for execution of wicked and unrepentant kings

3. He will especially

- a) Provide and Protect
- b) His Presence is with those who trust Him

BIBLE MEMORY WORK

Today: 12 April 2020

Text: Isaiah 28:16 A stone for a foundation

Therefore thus says the LORD God:

*Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone,
a precious cornerstone,*

A sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily.

1. Who is the Person who would lay the foundation stone?
It is none other than the LORD God.

2. What may we appreciate about the Foundation Stone?

- a) It is a tried stone
- b) It is a precious cornerstone
- c) It is a sure foundation

3. Response

- a) There must be faith
- b) There must not be hasty action at any time
 - i) There is no need to panic
 - ii) We may trust the Lord and all that He has said

NEXT SUNDAY: 19 April 2020

Text: 1 Peter 2:8 A stone of stumbling

And "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense."

*They stumble, being disobedient to the word,
to which they were appointed.*

POETRY CORNER

#1

JOY INEXPRESSIBLE

God knows that we need Joy to cope with life's difficulties;
The problems of life can cause one to feel that "all is vanity!"
The Lord Jesus came with wondrous insights in His teaching;
His words of wisdom can result in much-needed soul uplifting.

The Joy that Jesus promised was meant to be given in fulness;
It is a Joy that is enriching and there is the hope of fruitfulness.

It is a Joy that He Himself possessed that resulted in peace;
This is a gift to every believer who trusts, that He would release.

It is a Joy that is truly difficult to explain for it is "inexpressible;"
This is a fruit that the Holy Spirit creates or it would be impossible.
This Joy is part of a cluster of Fruit that we may pray for in hope;
The Spirit would be more than pleased to bless, that we might cope.

This joy is to be found in the Lord Jesus and His resurrection;
He was raised as a sign that He had caused death's destruction.
There is every reason to rejoice in the Lord as we celebrate Easter;
The gift of Joy that God offers will enable us to cope even with disaster.

Charles Tan

Inspiration: 1 Peter 1:8; John 15:11; Galatians 5:22-23

POETRY CORNER

2

What Can We Celebrate?

What can we celebrate when the outlook seems so gloomy?
Are there reasons to rejoice in the midst of times so stormy?
The answer to this must be a resounding "Yes!", with faith,
Our joy comes from the Lord and the Salvation that He gave!

Celebrating Easter will never be the same this year,
With various restrictions and a general sense of fear;
But our faith and our trust is in the same God above,
No matter where we are, we are kept by His great love!

We can celebrate hope and faith that we have in Him,
Our lives have been changed; we're redeemed from our sins!
We can celebrate knowledge and understanding of His word,
Our hearts can be encouraged by the messages heard!

We can celebrate life and the protection God provides,
In His grace and mercy we can trust and daily abide!
We can celebrate kinship and friendship in alternative ways,
Our love for one another stays strong through the darkest of days!

What can we celebrate? There are many things, really!
As we think about Easter, our faith must stand out, surely!
In our little ways we can offer prayers of thanksgiving to God,
And remember the significance of the sacrifice of our Lord!

Tang Hong Wee
Thoughts taken from Romans 5:8

POETRY CORNER

3

BORN AGAIN

God's purpose is always backed up with a plan,
He had sent His Son to the world to save Man.
In God's plan, all who believe are Born Again,
This vital doctrine, Jesus Christ took time to explain.

Born Again signifies a new birth which is spiritual,
The Holy Spirit breathes new life into the individual.
How the Spirit works may not physically visible,
Yet the impact to one's life will be so tangible.

We have been Born Again through the Gospel,
It is the Word of God which is alive and eternal.
The Spirit gives life when we receive well His Word,
He sanctifies us when we obey what we have heard.

Born Again and ushered into the Kingdom of God,
We prize this Kingdom because we love the Lord.
He has given us a living hope and joy inexpressible,
May we live for an inheritance which is incorruptible!

Yvette Seow

Inspiration: 1 Peter 1:3 and John 3:1-17

POETRY CORNER

4

God's Will

Palm Sunday starts the holy week to Easter;
It was the day Jesus entered Jerusalem triumphantly.
Welcomed as King and Saviour by believers,
Who laid palm fronds and clothing before Him respectfully.

It is God's will that His Son walk this path;
Though He knows it is fraught with pain and suffering.
Jesus steadfastly committed Himself to His Father in deep faith;
To round up lost sheep gone astray, aimlessly wandering.

We have been called and chosen to be His own;
Out of darkness we have come into His marvelous light.
To us believers, Jesus is our chief cornerstone;
Our foundation who gives us benefits received with great delight.

In the current pandemonium it is especially meaningful to remember;
Jesus' journey to Calvary, a treacherous and sorrowful encounter.
Which He overcame as a dreadful experience and emerged in splendour;
Victorious with His resurrection by the will of His Father.

Jessie Quek

Inspiration: 1 Peter 2:6,9,25

POETRY CORNER

5

The Law of Faith

The law of faith is a beautiful truth, ordained by God with love.
It is the basis by which we relate to Him, our Creator from above.
By the law of works, we stand condemned, falling short of His glory,
But by the law of faith, we are justified, although our sins are many.

God imputes righteousness to all, who in Him place their trust,
A righteousness we don't deserve, for He is holy and just.
In forbearance He overlooked our sins, but atonement had to be made,
So He sent forth His beloved Son, for the price of our sin to be paid.

What must we do to be justified? Simply by faith, accept God's salvation.
Yet this faith is not a one-time decision, but rather a lifelong commitment.
True faith is one that is alive, with definite steps to be taken,
To grow in knowledge and in love, and to triumph over temptation.

Abraham has set us an example of faith, as the father of many nations,
With eyes of faith he looked beyond his personal limitations.
He believed unwaveringly, that God's promise would come to fruition,
We too must seek to build a strong faith, finding hope in God's glorious salvation.

Alvin Foo
Inspiration: Rom. 3:21-4:25

BETHANY CHURCH ACTIVITIES

| | Day | Time | Venue | Location |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| WORSHIP SERVICES | | | | |
| Morning Worship Service | Sun | 10.30 am | Church Sanctuary | 2 nd floor |
| Children's Worship I (P1 – P3) | | | Auditorium 3-1 | 3 rd floor |
| Children's Worship II (P4 – P6) | | | Auditorium 4-1 | 4 th floor |
| Teens' Worship Service | | | Auditorium 3-8 | 3 rd floor |
| Evening-Bilingual Worship | | 4.00pm | Auditorium 4-7 & 4-8 | 4 th floor |
| SUNDAY SCHOOL | | | | |
| Crèche | Sun | 8.30am 10.30am | Green Turf | 1 st floor |
| Beginners' Sunday School | | 8.30am | Auditorium 2-1 | 2 nd floor |
| Junior Sunday School I | | | Auditorium 3-1 | 3 rd floor |
| Junior Sunday School II | | | Auditorium 4-8 | 4 th floor |
| Intermediate Sunday School | | | Auditorium 3-8 | 3 rd floor |
| Senior Sunday School I | | | Fellowship Hall | 1 st floor |
| Senior Sunday School II | | | Main Sanctuary | 2 nd floor |
| Senior Sunday School III | | | Prayer Room 4-1 | 4 th floor |
| Senior Sunday School IV | | | Fellowship Hall | 1 st floor |
| Senior Sunday School IV. II | | | Auditorium 2M | 2 nd floor |
| Special Needs Ministry | | | Auditorium 4-7 | 4 th floor |
| CHOIRS | | | | |
| Singing Kakis | Thurs | 8.00 pm | Auditorium 3-2 | 3 rd floor |
| One Voice | Sat | 5.00 pm | Auditorium 4-8 | 4 th floor |
| Youth Choir | | 5.00 pm | Auditorium 3-1 | 3 rd floor |
| Evergreens | Sun | 1.00 pm | Auditorium 3-1 | 3 rd floor |
| BIBLE STUDY | | | | |
| Church Bible Study | Tue | 8.00 pm | Church Sanctuary | 2 nd floor |
| Home Bible Study | 2 nd and 4 th Thurs | 3.00 pm | - | - |
| Mandarin Bible Study | 1 st and 3 rd Fri | 7.30 pm | 4 th Floor Auditorium | 4 th floor |
| CATECHISM CLASS | | | | |
| | Sun | 1.00 pm | Auditorium 4-8 | 4 th floor |
| PRAYER MEETING | | | | |
| | Mon | 8.00 pm | Church Sanctuary | 2 nd floor |
| FELLOWSHIP GROUPS | | | | |
| Young People's Group I | Sat | 3.00 pm | Auditorium 2-1 | 2 nd floor |
| Young People's Group II | | | Auditorium 3-8 | 3 rd floor |
| Young People's Group III | | | Auditorium 3-1 | 3 rd floor |
| Young Adults' Group | | | Auditorium 4-7 & 4-8 | 4 th floor |
| Young Married Group | | | Auditorium 4-1 | 4 th floor |
| Adults' Ministry | | 4.00 pm | Auditorium 4-1 | 4 th floor |

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This is My Story

Testimonies of three men who
would be consecrated as
Intern Pastors



EASTER SUNDAY

12 APRIL 2020



Introduction

A most blessed Easter to all!

My name is Moses and I have been a Student Pastor in Bethany for the past 3 years. This Easter, I would be taking the step of Consecration to become an Intern Pastor. I would like to share about how the past 3 years in full-time ministry have impacted me.

A time of experiencing God's work in my life

Then He said to them,

"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Matthew 4:19

These 3 years as a Student Pastor have truly changed my understanding and approach toward faith, life, and ministry. The pastoral training in Bethany is not designed as a Bible School that focuses on the academic pursuit of Biblical knowledge. Through the daily study of God's Word and exposure to actual pastoral ministry, the training that I have experienced is one that aims to build me up a pastor not just in knowledge and skill, but more importantly in heart, mind, and soul.

It has been a time of learning what it means to be a man of God, and seeking to make these lessons a part of my life. It has also been a time of un-

learning the problems and habits in my life that hindered me from growing as a servant of the Lord. There were also many episodes throughout my training where the Lord had to rebuke and correct me. These moments have been painful, but necessary! They have been significant in changing me, and causing me to grow and develop further as a servant of the Lord.

The making of an effective servant of God is a work that only He can do. God has wonderfully worked in my life the past 3 years, for which I am grateful. This is a work that I am challenged to keep seeking and submitting myself to as I move on to become an Intern Pastor.

A deeper love for the Word of God

*More to be desired are they than gold,
Yea, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
Psalm 19:10*

Being in the pastoral team has also enabled me to discover a sweetness of the Word of God that I had never known before. Learning from the Word of God at a far deeper level at Morning Classes has been thoroughly refreshing, stimulating, and also “heart” hitting. I was exposed to new levels of depth and profundity of God’s Word that brought special joy and excitement as I discovered and understood better. There have also been countless times where I have been awed by the power of God’s Word in my own life and in ministry.

The past 3 years of studying the Word of God with the pastoral team have helped me to not only understand it a little better, but also to develop a deeper personal love and appreciation for it. I have come to recognize how important and central God’s Word must be to the life and ministry of any servant of the Lord! Being a Student Pastor has made me greatly challenged to know the Word of God so much more, to live by the Word, and to one day become a skilled teacher and example of the Word in Bethany.

A closer walk with God

*I will love You, O Lord, my strength.
The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;
My God, my strength, in whom I will trust;
My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised
Psalm 18:1-3*

One of the most precious things that I take away from the past 3 years is a closer walk with God. Ever since I embarked on the full-time ministry, God's lovingkindness toward me has marked every step of my journey. He has most wonderfully given me the privilege to serve despite my limitations. He has been my Comfort in moments of discouragement. He has been my Strength in times of weakness. He has been my Teacher providing daily guidance. He has been my Joy in every experience of life and ministry.

These training years have enabled me to learn to relate to the Lord in a most personal way - seeking, trusting, and waiting upon Him. And He has never failed to be there for me. As I learn to depend on the Lord in every aspect of life and ministry, something that I have come to truly treasure are the times spent in stillness, quiet meditation, and prayer. For these are the moments where I learn to come before His presence, discern His voice, and appreciate Him all over again.

As I look back, I testify of how God has been so good to me! I continue to learn what it means to deepen my love for the Lord and to have a closer walk with Him. Learning to draw nearer to God has truly been one of the greatest blessings that I have experienced as I train.

A stronger commitment to serve

*No one, having put his hand to the plow,
and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.
Luke 9:62*

I began full-time ministry with a desire to serve the Lord, and the past 3 years have been a most wonderful and enriching time of my life! Looking ahead toward Internship, I recognize that there is still much for me to learn and grow as a pastor. I am deeply challenged to keeping growing, and to one day become a servant that is worthy of His calling. I seek to be faithful, and to continue giving of myself toward His service. Like a laborer with his hand to the plow, I pray to be committed to the lifelong endeavor of laboring for my Master.

Heartfelt appreciation to all in Bethany

I would like to take this opportunity to personally express my heartfelt appreciation and thanks to all in Bethany. Thank you for how you have received me into this precious spiritual family. Thank you for the privilege that you have given to me to train and to serve. Thank you for the love and support that you have shown to me throughout this journey. Thank you for all your prayers, and for standing alongside Gan Ann and me.

Bethany is a church and family that I have come to love dearly. It is my humble and earnest prayer, that God would empower me to do my part in the future of Bethany and the IPC family.



Dear brethren,

At Christmas 2016, Moses and I were commissioned as Student Pastors. How quickly 3 years have passed! Today, it is our great joy to undertake our appointment as Intern Pastors.

Looking back at these 3 years, I am immensely grateful to God for His grace and love poured out in my life. I am also deeply moved by the love, prayers and support from Bethany. Please allow me to share with you some reflections from my training as a Student Pastor.

Correction

The first work that the Lord needed to do was that of correction. In the Gospels, the disciples were corrected time and again by the Lord Jesus during their training years. Similarly, there were many areas in my life that needed to be addressed. They include:

- 1) The presumption of having Bible knowledge to offer the Lord in ministry – I was humbled to discover how little I know about the Bible, and that I did not have all that much to offer Him!
- 2) The wrong focus on producing work in ministry – I came to realise that the Lord is far more concerned about my walk with Him than the amount of work I do for Him

- 3) The problem of adding my own thoughts to the Scriptures – Thank God for Pastor who would patiently correct and guide me in interpreting the Word accurately!
- 4) My poor personal habits in life such as bad time management and carelessness – These problems need to be dealt with as I seek to live a life worthy and fitting of a servant of God

The lessons on correction were difficult to learn, and often painful. Yet I am grateful to God for doing this necessary work of correction, so that He can start His work of planting and building my life!

Cleansing

Beyond correction, there is also the need for cleansing in my life. Cleansing is neither straightforward nor immediate; it is a deep and complex work of God. At the same time, it requires diligence and perseverance on my part. I have come to see that the work of cleansing needs to be done at 3 levels:

- 1) The mind – The secular and worldly perspectives that I had picked up in my life
- 2) The heart – The misgivings in the heart that sometimes arise from challenges in life and ministry
- 3) The spirit – The stubbornness and rebellion in failing to give earnest heed to instruction and correction

The work of cleansing is an ongoing process, and I am committed to follow through faithfully. As the apostle Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 2:20-21, cleansing is key to be made sanctified and useful for the Lord as a vessel in His house!

Challenges

As we look ahead at being Intern Pastors, what is our challenge? Drawing from the lessons that Pastor had taught us these past 3 years, 5 things stand out in particular:

- 1) To be a man of God – Devoted to God, in pursuit of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness (1 Timothy 6:11)
- 2) To be a man of the Word – Giving all diligence to rightly divide the Scriptures (2 Timothy 2:15)
- 3) To cultivate a heart of great compassion – To sympathise, feel with and care for our brethren (Hebrews 4:15)
- 4) To learn servanthood – Not seeking praises for his work and counting all that he does as his rightful obligation to the Lord (Luke 17:10)
- 5) To catch the spirit of sonship – Obedient to the will of the Father, committed to do His work wherever He leads (John 5)

Internship is a special milestone in our continuing journey to become ordained servants of God. There will be new and greater challenges awaiting us in Internship. It is my prayer that I will continue to grow and learn the lessons that God seeks to teach me. Thank you so much for giving me this privilege to serve the Lord and all of you in Bethany. We seek your support in prayer as we commence our training as Intern Pastors!



Introduction

I am Student Pastor Simon Nagaraj and I come from Chennai. I am married and my wife's name is Joyce Paranjothi. We have a son, named Joyson Immanuel, who is 4 years old. For the past fourteen years, I have been in Sathiyam Church which is one of the IP Churches in India.

Before I came to Bethany, I went to a Bible school for three years in India. The lessons that I learned there were basic and there was not much depth. I ended up with a mechanical and superficial knowledge of God. Our great God gave me a wonderful privilege to study in Bethany and learn many deep and life changing lessons from our Master Teacher, Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Charles Tan.

I was commissioned to train as a Student Pastor on the 1st of June 2017 in Bethany. By the grace of God, I learned lessons that have shaped my life and ministry. It is my privilege and joy today to be consecrated as an Intern Pastor.

Please let allow me to share with you 5 ways that these lessons have influenced me.

1. Instruction and Impact

I have never seen such a Church like Bethany in my life. Bethany is wonderfully God's kind of Church. Bethany is led by the Pastoral Team in a Biblical

way. I am amazed at how the Pastoral Team, Session Members and Congregation work together with the same spirit of faith and oneness. Here people care for people and God touches people's lives through His Word. Even though I am from India, the people in Bethany accepted me as one of their own. I learned from them how the same spirit of faith and oneness are important in Christian living. It is wonderful that the Word of God is central in Bethany. The Pastoral Team members have committed themselves to teach the Word of God to people. The members of the Pastoral Team have taught me the Word of God with fullness of joy and with a great sense of compassion. For the past three years, Bethany's same spirit of faith and oneness, and the Pastoral Team's teaching, care and concern have greatly instructed and impacted me in my heart, mind and spirit. It has helped me to learn how God's kind of Church should be. In my future ministry I want to lead the church in a Biblical way like Bethany.

2. Changes in my life

a) Growth in Faith

Before I came to Bethany, my faith was not great. I had just a basic knowledge and understanding about faith. I thought that basic faith was enough and I did not need to grow further. Pastor has taught me from Abraham's life in Romans 4 how **"The just shall live by faith"**. Through his teaching I acknowledged my understanding was wrong about faith. I learned more about what faith is. It is being alive to God, being obedient to God, walking with God and growing in the Knowledge of God. Wow, what a wonderful lesson this is! I am deeply encouraged to put this faith into practice in my life. After I learned this lesson, I look for constant growth in my faith. I do not want to remain in shallow and superficial knowledge of God anymore. In these three years, I thank God that even though my faith was not great in the beginning but end of my training I can say at least my faith is grown a little bit. My challenge is to grow constantly in my faith.

b) Dealt with Sin Problems

At the start of my training, I failed to address my sin problems and I stubbornly did not want to deal with them. I assumed that I was a very good person but my heart was actually corrupted with the problem of pride. There was no humility in my heart. I did not know that hidden sins existed in my heart. Pastor taught me from Jeremiah 17:9 reads, **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"** I realized how I was sinful and my heart was desperately wicked. I have learned not to hide my sins before God anymore and I must address and deal with them. I must look for constant cleansing in my life. Thereafter I became much more aware of my sin problems. I check my own heart and spirit to see if I am loyal to the Lord. My prayer is that God will continue to cleanse and help me to live for His glory.

c) Love for His Word

In the past, there was not much regard and respect for the Lord and His Word. I honestly say that I never spent much time to read God's Word in the past but I wanted to teach others. I did not know how to express my love for God. Through these three years of training in Bethany, my perspective has changed. I am amazed that every day, the Pastoral Team comes to Church very early and goes home very late. They spend much time reading God's Word and working very hard. They prepare themselves very well for the weekend ministries. They also encouraged me to hide God's Word in my heart and to spend time with the Lord. I have learned from them If I do not read and hide God's Word in my heart, I cannot love the Lord and His Word. Bethany's Pastoral Team is a great example for me. Their commitment, devotion and special love for the Lord and His Word have deeply encouraged me. This was a very new lesson for me but through their exemplary life I have also started to practice reading and meditating God's Word and spending time with the Lord in my daily life.

3. A disciple of Jesus

Pastor has taught me what discipleship means from **Mark 8:34**. It reads **"Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"**. In the beginning of my training, I was very sad and

there was no joy in me because I was always thinking about my family especially my wife and my 1-year old son, Joyson. I did not concentrate fully on my studies because I did not deny myself and I was not ready to take up my cross.

Through Pastor's teaching, I have learned that as a disciple I must be a learner, listener and follower of Jesus. Without denying myself and taking up my cross I cannot follow the Lord Jesus Christ properly. I must look for God's will rather than my own will. Through this lesson, I was deeply convicted to deny myself and take up my cross. I realized that I did not lose my focus and I must focus on God and my studies. I thank God within this short period of time God has changed my heart and helped me to focus on Him and my studies.

I have learned another important lesson in discipleship. In our morning classes, Pastor corrected me many times but sometimes my heart did want to be corrected because Pastor's corrections made me sad. I thank God that this lesson, on discipleship helped me to accept those corrections and keep learning as a disciple. It is good that I am corrected by Pastor because it has brought important changes to my life and ministry.

4. A man of God

Pastor has taught me this important lesson from **1 Timothy 6**. I have learned how a man of God must be faithful. He must not think that godliness is a means of gain and must not be a money-minded person because the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. This lesson indeed encouraged me to be faithful in money matters in ministry.

Pastor's teaching has encouraged me that I must flee the love of money and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience and gentleness. My challenge is to keep this commandment without spot and blameless in my life and ministry.

5. Ministry of God

When I came to Bethany, I had a wrong understanding about the Pastoral

ministry. I thought that ministry is all about teaching and preaching to others but I never thought about what God's ministry really is. Through Pastor's ministry and his life, my perspective has changed. I learned that ministry is so much more than that. It involves servanthood, integrity and skillfulness. I also learned that I must be humble in my spirit and have a loyal heart when I serve the Lord and His people. I must have a very good relationship with the Lord first. I must be a good example to others also. I learned that ministry is not simply teaching the Word of God but having care and concern for people, empathizing with them, teaching them with compassion and leading them in God's path skillfully.

Conclusion

I thank God very much for these three wonderful years of training in Bethany. I thank all the Pastoral Team, all the Session Members and all the Church members for your words of encouragement, love and support. I am so happy that I have learned many precious lessons in Bethany. I stand corrected in my heart, mind and spirit. I want to follow Bethany and the spirit of Bethany's Pastoral Team as I return to serve the Lord in India.

Thank you!

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