

BETHANY

INDEPENDENT-
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

God's Kind of Church...

Where God is touching lives...

And people care for people.

Bethany IV ... 6 June 2021

MEDITATION

REV DR CHARLES TAN

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Meditation	1
Announcements	4
Bible Memory Work	6
Worship	7
Testimony	8
Poetry Corner	16
Order of Worship	19

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 4:11 - 13

GIVE ATTENTION TO READING

STRONG INSTRUCTION

In the days of old, teachers instructed their pupils very strongly. This was the way the Lord Jesus trained His Apostles. This was the way the Apostle Paul instructed Timothy and Titus.

(Continued on page 2)

MEDITATION

(Continued from page 1)

¹¹ These things command and teach.

¹² Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. 1 Timothy 4:11-13

1. The Instructions

- a) Command and teach
- b) Let no one despise your youth
- c) Be an example
- d) Give attention

2. Imperative statements

- a) Paul wrote as an Apostle
- b) He also wrote as a spiritual father
- c) He wrote as a Master-Teacher
- d) Timothy would know how to understand the use of the Imperative
 - i) These were strong words
 - ii) They were not options
 - iii) They were more than suggestions

(Continued on page 3)

MEDITATION

(Continued from page 2)

- iv) Timothy would take heed to all these statements as commands
- v) He trusted in Paul's wisdom

GIVE ATTENTION

Meditation, if it is to be successful, requires careful attention.

1. Give attention to the Scriptures
2. The Scriptures were publicly read
 - a) Not many were able to read
 - b) Fewer could afford to own Bibles (or portions of the Lord's word)

THE SCRIPTURES AND THEIR PLACE IN MEDITATION

The Scriptures play a vital role. We need to know what the Bible actually teaches before we can practise Meditation! The Pastoral role is multi-faceted! The Church needs to be taught carefully and deeply and then shown how to meditate on the doctrines found in the Scriptures!

Write to me at: charlestan@bethanyipc.sg

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME TO BETHANY

We are glad that you have chosen to worship the Lord Jesus Christ with us today, albeit via Live Broadcast! May your heart be challenged to practise Biblical Meditation!



CONGRATULATIONS

Heartfelt congratulations to Yin Zhou and Aleena on the occasion of their wedding on 5 June 2021. May the Lord's wonderful blessings be upon them!



COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1. Phase 2 (Heightened Alert)

- a) Let us not allow fear or fatigue to come in
- b) Let us exercise faith and courage

2. Our Response:

Our Ministry as a Church continues:

On-Line Worship Services:

- a) Saturday, 5 June 2021
Youth Worship
Time: 3.00pm
- b) Sunday, 6 June 2021
Morning Worship
Time: 10.00am

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW BB COLUMN DEDICATED TO SENIORS

1. How do we define the word "Senior?"

Some define it as a person who has reached:

a) 60 years

b) 65 years

c) Given a higher life expectancy in Singapore
We describe Seniors as those who have reached 65

2. What limitations should we look out for?

Moses in his Psalm wrote:

"The days of our lives are seventy years;
And if by reason of strength, they are eighty years,
Yet their boast is only labour and sorrow;
For it is soon cut off, and we fly away." Psalm 90:10

a) For many, the average life span is 70 years

b) For those who are stronger, they may live up to 80 years

c) Nevertheless, life is "soon cut off, and we fly away!"
(Death comes all too soon)!

3. A new Column in our Bethany Bulletin commences

a) This Column is dedicated to Seniors

b) It can include the thoughts of Seniors

c) It can be thoughts written to encourage Seniors

BIBLE MEMORY WORK

TODAY: 06 June 2021

Text: Psalm 77:6 I meditate within my heart

I call to remembrance my song in the night;

I meditate within my heart,

And my spirit makes diligent search.

1. Psalm 77 notes hard times that we may experience

- a) Things go wrong
- b) Life is tough
- c) One feels sad and depressed

2. Things we should do when such times come

- a) Remember a song
- b) Meditate in the heart
- c) Practise diligent search in the spirit

NEXT SUNDAY: 13 June 2021

Text: Psalm 119:15 I will meditate on Your precepts

I will meditate on Your precepts,

And contemplate Your ways.

WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

Psalm 119:61-62

*⁶¹ The cords of the wicked have bound me,
But I have not forgotten Your law.*

*⁶² At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You,
Because of Your righteous judgments.*

1. Challenges in Life

- a) Struggles with wickedness
- b) Sometimes we feel "bound"

2. Conquering struggled

- a) By remembering God's laws
- b) We can even rise up to thank God for His righteous judgments

TESTIMONY

Surviving a Second Open-Heart Surgery

Introduction

My name is Beng Hoe and I will be 63 in a few months. I would like to share with you the goodness of the Lord in my life with a brief introduction.

God has been good to my family and me all these years. I survived an aortic dissection of the whole aorta back in 2016. This was a supposedly fatal condition. Most people who suffered from such an aortic dissection do not live to tell their story. In fact, my heart surgeon, Prof Kristine Teoh was not very optimistic about my prognosis. While I was unconscious in the operating theatre awaiting surgery, my heart stopped and she had to get my heart to beat before commencing the open-heart surgery on me.

Many in Bethany prayed and I survived the emergency surgery with all my organs functioning without any issues.

It was a miracle that I survived the aortic dissection and I am most grateful to the Lord that I lived to see 2 beautiful grandchildren, one born in 2017 and the other in 2019. To God be the Glory!

Recent Medical Updates

Following my heart surgery in 2016, my heart surgeon had been reviewing me very regularly on an annual basis.

On 8 June 2020, I underwent a CT Scan and the next day, the hospital called to tell me that my surgeon having seen the results, had ordered a heart ECHO. I felt that something was not right. During the review with my surgeon, she disclosed that from the results of the CT Scan and ECHO, there seemed to be a tear in my pulmonary artery, resulting in an accumulation of blood. The pressure build-up in this blood reservoir was affecting the functioning of the aortic valve (the valve was not functioning optimally). She also told me that she could

TESTIMONY

not see the exact spot of the tear, as it was masked by the blood accumulated.

Need for Second Open-Heart Surgery

She spent one whole hour explaining the condition and told me that an open-heart surgery was necessary. My wife, Michelle, and I could sense that the surgeon was not pushing for me to go for the surgery. She explained to us that the surgery would be very complicated and risky. She also told me that I should prepare my 'bucket list' before the surgery. It was very difficult for me to arrive at the decision of surgery, especially knowing the complexity and risk coupled with the advice to prepare my bucket list.

I was also not comfortable going for another open-heart surgery without the surgeon knowing the exact spot of where the blood was leaking from. There were a lot of questions flooding my mind. Such as:

- 1) What if she opened up my chest and could not locate the tear or where the blood was leaking from?
- 2) If I opt not to go for the surgery, would I have a few more good years?
- 3) If I opt for surgery, would I end my life on the operating table, since surgery was very complicated and risky according to surgeon?
- 4) What is the mortality rate for a second open-heart surgery?

It was indeed a very difficult decision to make there and then. Wisdom from the Lord was what I needed most at that point and my mind was very clouded. And since I could not arrive at a decision, I told the surgeon to monitor the leak in the meantime. During the consultation, the surgeon ordered a MIBI test as I was scheduled for a bladder surgery on 26 June. The urologist needed clearance from my heart surgeon. From the MIBI test results, she told me that my heart was functioning with more than 95% efficiency and gave the thumb's up for the minor bladder surgery. I was happy to learn that my heart was functioning well and was even more determined not to opt for surgery.

Since I opt for monitoring of the condition, the surgeon ordered another CT Scan on 7 September 2020 to monitor the leak. During the review of the scan, she told me that the leak was not getting any worse and seemed stable. I was overjoyed and thought that the leak may even heal by itself.

TESTIMONY

The Awakening - Change of Decision

On 4 November, I had my medical appointment with my cardiologist, Prof Tan Huay Cheem and during the review, Huay Cheem told me, "Beng Hoe, you have to go for the surgery to have the leak repaired. The leak will not heal by itself and is only likely to get worse. It is better for you to go for a planned surgery than waiting for an emergency to happen".

When Huay Cheem told me this, it struck me that I should be responsible enough to do what was necessary and right. It would be very irresponsible of me to pass the burden of having to make such critical and tough decision involving my life to my family if an emergency had occurred.

Realising that this was a matter of responsibility enabled me to quickly make the decision to go for surgery.

On my way home, I recalled the incident of my aortic dissection in 2016 and started to count my blessings of extended years of life and thank God for His Grace and Mercy, where I could enjoy grand-fatherhood with my two lovely grandchildren. They are indeed such wonderful blessings from the Lord!

Meeting with Pastor – Preparation for Surgery

Immediately, I fixed an appointment to meet up with Pastor Charles on the late morning of 5 November 2020. During my meeting with Pastor, he supported my decision to proceed with the second open-heart surgery. He told me "Beng Hoe, if the surgeon has no confidence in the surgery, she would not dare to 'touch you' (operate on you)".

Pastor took time to prepare me for the surgery and shared the following 5 verses from the book of Psalm with me:

1) Psalm 17:8

Keep me as the apple of Your eye; Hide me under the shadow of Your wings,

2) Psalm 36:5-7

Your mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

TESTIMONY

Your righteousness is like the great mountains; Your judgements are a great deep; O LORD, You preserve man and beast. How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.

3) Psalm 61:4

I will abide in Your tabernacle forever, I will trust in the shelter of Your wings.

4) Psalm 63:7

Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.

5) Psalm 57:1

Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge, Until these calamities have passed by.

I am very grateful once again to Pastor to walk this journey with me. I took time to meditate upon these verses. They were so reassuring and comforting and I learnt to put my trust under the shadow of His wings.

Meeting with Surgeon – Critical Details of the Surgical Procedure

On 10 November 2020, in another one hour-long consultation with the surgeon, she patiently elaborated a few critical and risky stages of the surgery to Michelle and me:

1. First of all, she would need to cut a few openings, one near my collar bone and the other at the groin, so that she could connect me to an artificial heart-lung machine (Cardiopulmonary Bypass Machine – CPB in short). This CPB will take over the pumping of the heart and lungs. Once this was done, she would temporarily put my heart to rest (stop the heart from functioning). Another cut would be required near my left breast to insert a tube to relieve the pressure of the heart before she could start. She also said that she may have to collapse one side of my lung.
- 2) Next, she would need to bring my body temperature down to 18 degree

TESTIMONY

Celsius. This is inducing a deep hypothermia (clinically managed artificial death) necessary to stop the circulation of blood flow and allow her to have better visual field and control during the surgery. This is a risky procedure as it may potentially affect the organs (e.g. kidneys and brain). She explained that at this temperature, she only has 20 minutes to access to my heart, find the leak and do the repair work. In contrast, during the 2016 surgery, she brought down my body temperature to 26 degree Celsius. The lower the body temperature, the longer the time she would have. To me, 20 minutes sounds too short a time for such a complicated surgery.

- 3) Once my body temperature reached 18 degree Celsius, the 20 minutes starts to tick! She would need to open up the breast bone via the sternum. The allowance between the sternum to the pulmonary artery was only 1mm. I asked if she would be using any special laser saw to cut the sternum, and she replied that there is no such laser saw available yet. She would be using the good old conventional manual saw to cut the sternum. It dawned on me that absolute precision is critical or else, the whole surgery would become very bloody and complicated. Once she gained access to the heart safely, she could commence the repair work.

She estimated that the surgery will take at least 9 hours. I was scheduled for the surgery on 6 January 2021.

Preparations For D-Day

With less than 2 months to surgery, I started to prepare my bucket list as advised and I even scheduled a timetable for each of those tasks which I must get done before the surgery. Basically, I had to brace myself to prepare for the worse outcome.

Knowing my impending surgery, our Saturday family dinners took on a different meaning. I really enjoyed the gatherings and just having the children and grandchildren together means a lot to me.

I was pleasantly surprised that Joshua and Jodeline specially organised a photography session for the family and we had Jarrod come over to our house near

TESTIMONY

(Continued from page 12)

Christmas to professionally shoot some of the best shots for our family album. We had much fun and laughter despite the sobering thought of my surgery.

In preparation for the surgery, I spent much time meditating on the 5 verses Pastor shared with me and tried memorising them as much as I could. Through meditation and prayer, I was filled with the peace of God as I put my trust under the shadow of His wings. Michelle was surprised that I was not burdened as I could fall sleep so easily every night without any problem. My neighbours who knew about my impending surgery were surprised to see me doing my daily routine stroll as if I am not troubled nor fearful. I could only attribute this to the power and promise of the word of God which gives me such peace that surpasses all understanding. This is the peace mentioned in Phil 4:6-7, *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"*.

Physically, I continued with my daily stroll of 4 to 5km so that I could be as fit as possible for surgery, but I could sense that I was getting more tired as I drew closer to surgery.

The Surgery on 6 January 2021

The 2 months passed very quickly and I was admitted to NUH.

At 7am, on my way to the operating theatre (OT), Michelle and all my children prayed for me. I just kept reciting the Bible verses and kept my focus on the Lord. I drew strength and peace as I enter into a "battle" to fight for my life.

It took the surgeon 13 hours to complete the surgery. When I woke up, I was semi-conscious, drifting in and out but I asked the nurse whether I am alive. The nurse replied "yes, God is good" and I replied her "all the time!".

In the early hours of 9 January, as I was recuperating and sub-conscious, I woke up to a commotion at about 4.20am. Apparently there was an emergency and I could hear the nurses trying very hard to revive someone. I could hear the BP-Heartrate machine sound going tee-tee, tee-tee, tee-tee and suddenly

TESTIMONY

teeeee. In my sub-conscious state, I thought the person slipping away was me. In response, I kept clenching and releasing my fist with both hands, trying to do my part to stay alive. I tried very hard to get attention of the nurse and when I finally did, I asked her, "Is it me? did my heart stopped?". She asked me for my NRIC number and when I responded to her, she said, "No, it is not you". It was like a nightmare, an experience, a very scary one that I will never forget.

I spent 4 days in the ICU and 10 days in the ward, recovering very well, regaining from strength to strength and was discharged on 19 January 2021.

According to the surgeon, the operation went very well. I was stable throughout and she did not need to collapse one side of the lung. She managed to saw the sternum with precision and did not cut into the artery (only 1mm clearance)! To her horror, my aortic root was torn and was just dangling by a strand, about to give way. It would have dislodged had it not been for the timely intervention. It was beyond repair and she had to replace the whole aortic root and valve. When I heard this, my heart skipped a beat and I realised how close I was to death! If it had dislodged, the whole situation would have been a lot more complex and I would not have survived the emergency surgery. I am just so thankful to God for His perfect timing and plan. It was so amazing that I came out of such a massive operation unscathed. God had once again showered His Grace and Mercy upon me. I could trace His Hand of guidance in the decision to opt for the surgery. Indeed, to God be the Glory!

Bless The Lord, O My Soul

Four months on and I am now recuperating well and had just completed a Heart Rehabilitation Programme at the NUH Heart Centre. I had just embarked on a second Heart Rehabilitation Programme.

Thank you so much, Pastor, for preparing me for the surgery and sharing those encouraging verses from the Word of God. They meant so much to me and gave me much peace and strength, when I was sailing against the raging storms of life. Thank you for marking my surgery date on your calendar and for praying for me unceasingly.

TESTIMONY

(Continued from page 14)

I am also thankful to those of you who received updates from Michelle regularly so that you could pray for me. Thank you for all your love and prayers.

Most of all, I am thankful to God for His Grace and Mercy and for holding the surgeon's hands in the delicate procedure.

I would like to join David as he blessed the Lord with Psalm 103:2-5

Bless the LORD, O my soul,

And forget not all His benefits:

Who forgives all your iniquities,

Who heals all your diseases,

Who redeems your life from destruction,

Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,

Who satisfies your mouth with good things,

So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

To God be the Glory!

Beng Hoe

30 May 2021

POETRY CORNER

1

GIVE ATTENTION

The Apostle Paul was a great spiritual success;
He had learned how to walk in righteousness.
There were principles he learned to live by;
These truths he sought to carefully apply.

He taught the younger pastors vital lessons;
These were based on the Biblical reasons.
The challenge was to give full attention;
There must be focus and contemplation.

The Scriptures were not well- read by many;
Reading it publicly was to be given priority.
The Scriptures must form a solid foundation;
Then can the believer practise meditation.

The teachings of the Scriptures must be emphasized;
Believers must be well-taught and be well-advised.
This is a task that all churches must be committed to;
This will help ensure that believers remain true!

Charles Tan

Inspiration: 1 Timothy 4:11-13

POETRY CORNER

2

His Love Endures Forever

God's love for His chosen endures forever;
It is permanent as He is faithful and never changes;
His lovingkindness, thus compared to life, is better
For earthly life is temporal though its pleasure assuages.

Seek the Lord early during the stillness of the hour;
Relish fellowship with Him for He quenches the thirsty soul;
May we not only praise Him for benefits we scour,
Even when He hides His face true believers continue to extol!

Let us begin each day recalling the Lord's goodness;
His bountiful provisions and blessings fill the hearts with joy;
Such thoughts give us strength to persevere through life's darkness;
His presence provides comfort and peace to enjoy.

Honour and glorify the Lord for He is kind and loving;
No matter our sinful ways He is gentle and does not resort to wield the rod;
Let us rejoice in the shadow of His wings;
For He is our God, the one and only God!

Jessie Quek

Inspiration: Psalm 63

POETRY CORNER

3

MY SOUL SILENTLY WAITS

When the challenges of life increase,
The heart is heavy and feels ill at ease.
We are tempted to react impulsively,
But we must learn to wait for God silently.

Effective waiting involves meditating on God,
And dwelling on our knowledge of the Lord.
He is our Rock and our immovable Anchor,
Our deliverance comes from Him, our Savior.

As we wait quietly, we must actively pray,
And seek to trust in God each step of the way.
We know that He is near and will not depart,
A sense of hope fills and uplifts the heart.

It is so good to wait upon God with assurance,
In His power, there is steadfast confidence.
God will renew and strengthen the soul,
He rejoices the heart and makes us whole!

Yvette Seow

Inspiration: Psalm 62

ORDER OF WORSHIP



CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Dr. Charles Tan

INVOCATION

MESSAGE

“I will meditate on all Your work”

Text: Psalm 77

BENEDICTION

