

Nehemiah 4:6: So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.



Vision: CCBC, Toward Healthy Growing Disciple-Making Church

2014 Theme: Building and Bringing

October 2014

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The Benefits of Daily Devotion

By Jenny Chua

During the June holiday break from our DG study, I read and re-read a book entitled "Our Daily Walk" by Jack Hayford. It is a wonderfully written book for Christians who sincerely seek to practice a life time of daily devotion.

To be frank, it is never easy to keep a discipline of daily devotion. I often lost momentum in keeping it a daily routine after a while. The author pointed out that the practice of a devotional habit is a spiritual exercise, not just an intellectual one. Devotional exercises are not meant to be ritualistic and rigid. It is no wonder we grew weary after some time.

God impressed upon my heart that He wants me to be renewed in the habit of disciplined daily time with him. I will share a little on my self-discovery journey here. The author stressed that there are at least 2 fundamental aspects that call for our attention when we come to daily devotion.

Before we begin a practice of daily devotions, we need firstly, to learn the power of 'Coming to Jesus's feet.' Such a position indicates humility, teachability and respect. The author gave some ideas as to how we can approach God when we come to Jesus' feet; to enter into His presence with praise and thanks, e.g. finding a new reason to thank Him; singing a song to the Lord or humming a tune that you have learned (in my case the song 'A Pure Heart' came to my mind). But be sure of this: whatever effort we make to sing praises to God with a "new song", He hears and receives as a sweet sound to His ear.

A second step outlined by the author: Presenting your heart (confession and cleansing). Approaching God involves worship, thanksgiving and praise. Here we may worship by thanking God in some specific ways that he had shown himself to us. Invite the Lord to search your heart.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive ways in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23, 24) David's prayer to God teaches us a fundamental lesson: the purpose of having God search our hearts is that we may discover sin and confess it - without self-justifying it.

Whether we like to admit it or not, we all wear masks at times (to hide our thoughts, motives, emotions). We have pride, hidden sins, habitual behaviors, lifestyles that we have developed and we are often too quick to suppose we are right in our actions, our analysis of situations, the opinions of other people that really don't reflect the kind of person God intended for us to be!

Coming to Jesus' feet – He begin to confront, to convict. There lies within us a need to adjust a pattern in our relationships, an aspect of our daily activity or an event, a realization that can only come about when I am led to see myself through the eyes of God.

When we take time to focus on our Lord, we'll find truth unfolding before us as we read and reflect; as we progress along, we receive clarity and wisdom that come from seeing things as God sees them. Prayer becomes more fulfilling, daily

duties grow more reflective of His wisdom. These are spiritual developments that flow from our availability to be taught, to be touched and to be shaped by Him.

We become open to receiving His leading in all aspects of our life, as James says *“Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you”* (James 4:7,8). This verse shows us that although God is willing to draw close to each of us, there is an important scriptural condition before He can do this: we must draw near to God first and then He will draw near to us. The verses from James gives us two directives on “drawing near”: Submit and Resist.

So it becomes clear. His rule and reign begin to broaden and deepen within me. I personally experienced the Holy Spirit’s prompting when I submit to His leading, e.g. I sense a nudge to do or not to do something – to take up a task given, to make a call to encourage someone, even to stop doing the task I am at. I would still miss out my daily devotion somedays, nonetheless I am thankful for the new-found joy of devotion – keeping a daily appointment with Jesus.

I hope you would, like me appreciate the time spent before the Lord and begin your new journey with Jesus Christ.

Can Do DG Outreach to FCSC By Bennett Wong

“I found gold! I found gold! Look it’s gold!”

Little Bryan (not his real name) had been digging the loose soil very determinately with a stick. It was the only tool he could find to engage in a treasure dig. The rest of the boys were running and yelling with gusto in a game of “Captain’s Ball”. Bryan seemed quite contented to amuse himself in his Indiana Jones style excavation. He gingerly pried a lump of yellow earth that lay beneath the soil he had cleared.

“Look,” he said. “Gold!”

“Wow, yeah,” I replied. “Maybe you’d like to keep it secret?”

“Look, Uncle Richard,” said Bryan, stumbling over, trying to arrest Uncle Richard’s attention.

“I found gold.” The find was like the most fascinating discovery he had made that day.

“You found gold? Give it to me,” replied Uncle Richard without missing a beat before turning back to the game with the rest of the boys.

The children from Friendship Christian Student Centre (FCSC) were in the midst of a term break, and FCSC had organized a day out at Lower Pierce Reservoir. The men from the ‘Can-Do’ Discipleship Group had volunteered their time to chauffeur the children to the park and we were blessed with clear skies. The children had spent a good part of the morning exploring the park. There was no lack of camaraderie while taking in the delight of open spaces and even spotting squirrels at play. Discover, learn, interaction, play... ah, the world of a child.



I was beginning to wonder, is this worth our day off from work that some of us took to drive and chaperone the children to the park? What good, let alone a great feat, am I contributing here compared to what I could have been doing at the office? Somehow I couldn’t help but reflect on Jesus’ response when He was asked, *“Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”* (Matt 18:1). How would you have answered this query? I’d imagine you would have suggested the greatest would be one who could keep the law and contribute to society in very significant ways or one who benefited the largest number of people in a community; it may be someone like a Mother Theresa who gave her life to looking after the rejects of society or a Martin Luther King who fought for the rights and dignity of a human race.

However, Jesus simply beckoned a little child to take center-stage and said, *“Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven... whoever humbles himself like*

*this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”
(Matt 18:2-4)*

What does it mean to change and become like little children? Jesus’ words seemed to presume that all of us need change. Come to think of it, as I progress through the years I discover my need to constantly change, change that is guided by the wisdom of God’s word. I certainly need to change in my attitude towards people and circumstances; change in controlling some of my unsavory temperaments; change in how I trust and obey God as He allows challenges to test my beliefs and values... the list can be endless. But to change and become like little children? Was Jesus suggesting that we should regress from maturity? After all, we mature as we grow to being adults, don’t we?

Change in the inner person is difficult and sometimes painful, albeit in various degrees depending on the situation one encounters. Change of our inner being often cuts against the grain of our nature. This is why Paul lamented, *“I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do” (Rom 7:15)*. We either think we know better or we want to have our own way, to dominate, to prove that we do not end up looking like a fool. That is pride, which seems to grow proportionately, if not exponentially, with my age.

But how does one change to become a great person in the kingdom of heaven? The answer lies in the humility of a child. Jesus calls for us to be humble. He calls for humility to believe at His word, humility to accept by faith that He is in control, humility to recognize our limitations and that we don’t have answers to some issues no matter how much we yearn to know, humility to allow God to work out something beautiful in His time. Humility is painful to bear where much pride needs to be eroded. Yet, through humility one can be most liberated and at peace when one comes into submission and obedience under God.

I may not have found a pot of gold at the end of that day, but I found treasure in the form of God’s word reflected in the humility and wonder of a child.



THE GREAT COMMISSION VISION: MAKING DISCIPLES—Success, People, Faith-Projections, Bridge-Building.

By Rev Gary Choong

Listening to so many testimonies of God’s deep work of grace in the members of each of the five Disciple Groups (DGs) on DG Day (Oct 5, 2015) was such an encouragement to me, and I am sure to many who were there to celebrate together CCBC’s one-year disciple-making journey with God. What a blessed year it has been for everyone who is in a DG! As we recounted and recollected God’s grace and truth at work in the lives of everyone, we are so mindful that apart from God we can do nothing!

On August 10, 2014, the DG leaders, Asst. DGLs and core-team members gathered together to ask the Lord for guidance and direction for the coming years: First, we asked—God willing, if you have every resource to ‘succeed’ toward fulfilling Vision 2020, how would you describe the success?

The participants described what **SUCCESS** looked like if we had every resource toward fulfilling Vision 2020:

- Resource = Multi-Leadership Team – preparation of leadership team;
- Self-Sustaining
- Multiplication
- Impactful
- Fulfillment (God’s purpose)
- Enlargement

- Growth (spiritual as well as numbers – bearing lasting fruits)
- Committed People (to work towards common goal)
- Leadership Rotation
- Devoted Disciples (new disciples birthed)

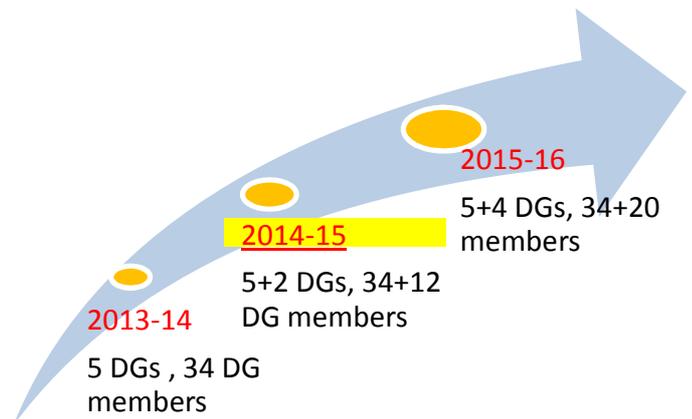
The second question was asked: What do you think it will take for the church to 'succeed' by the grace of God? The participants described the **HOW** to get to the End Goals: **PEOPLE**:

- Intensive ('out of the heart') & Intentional (*purposeful, specific*) Prayer.
- We are committed to owning the goals we set.
- To engage the youths
- Every member to find his/her place to fulfill the M-V goals. Passion/Gifts.
- To identify people according to their capacities and capability.
- Working together – Iron Sharpen Iron.
- God fearing leadership
- Dependent on God's grace and favor.
- PIPE – Pray, Implement, Pray, Evaluate.
- Obey His methods
- Train Men/Women. 222. 2 Tim 2:2 (Support/Train)
- RC – Responsible, Committed
- PAP – People, Action/Available, Plan
- Vibrant worship

When we look at the two key questions we asked, and looked at the answers received, we get a sense of knowing that the DGLs, Asst. DGLs, and core-team members are all raring to go to fulfill the Great Commission Vision—discipleship, and disciple-making!

To this end, we are setting by the grace of God, **our FAITH-PROJECTIONS in multiplying from FIVE DGs (34 members) in 2013, to SEVEN DGs (46 members) 2014-15; and NINE DGs (54 members) in 2015-16**

Faith Goals for 2014-16



We have planned several bridge-building events to BRING pre-believing friends, families from now till June 2015 culminating at the church retreat in June. We started with the Starfish Project by sharing a name, and praying for that person(s) that we want to make a difference in his/her life.



As we share these descriptive SUCCESS, PEOPLE, and FAITH-PROJECTIONS by the DGLs, Asst. DGLs, and core-team, we invite everyone to allow for God to meld our hearts in unity so that together we may be used of Him to fulfill the Great Commission Vision to make disciples.