

## **En-visioning and Covenanting Retreat on Jan 18 2013- A Reflection by David Chan**

A total of 21 CCBC members and friends gathered on an otherwise ordinary Friday, to seek the face of the Lord and hear His voice; to garner hearts and minds together to do His Will, and to beseech His leadership and guidance upon His beloved church.

As we started the day in worship, we were brought to mind, in Ephesians 1, of the special privilege that we had in being His church; the people of God- that we are chosen by God Himself, and that we are indeed blessed in the heavenly realm with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

The call to prayer and to wait on Him was evident as we sought to lay aside each of our own agendas, and to render ourselves- heart, mind and will- afresh to the Lord. It was a sweet hour of prayer as the members gathered into their most natural groupings, shared and prayed for the church and for one another's walk with the Lord in the New Year. The process of waiting on the Lord was invaluable as our church sought to discern and to define a collective shared vision for the coming years. Without the Lord's leading, there would truly be no 'Building & Bringing'.

Whatever that was to follow was truly a work of grace as the Holy Spirit guided the various small groups in talking through the spiritual environment of this local church and the collective aspirations of the members. A few key ideas came up:

1. Ownership- The ownership of the vision cannot be in the hands of the pastor or a few individuals. On the contrary, the vision has to be owned by us all, and this will be evidenced by willing commitment among the members and active participation in working out the vision to fruition.
2. Transformation- At the heart of the vision is a deep personal renewal and revival, leading to corporate revival. The spiritual maturity of the members is a key outcome for the disciple-making church to aspire towards.
3. Small groups- We acknowledge the importance of forming vibrant, authentic small groups, as the sense of bonded community is a vital model and instrument in encouraging spiritual formation and exhorting one another to follow Jesus.
4. Outreach- Any disciple-making church cannot exist in and for itself, but it must have a strong element of outreach in order to reach the world for Jesus. A few social outreach opportunities- such as Good News Club, Senior's Day Centre and others- in our local landscape were shared for the consideration of the members.
5. Disciple-making- We affirm the call to disciple-making as the core business of the Church of Jesus Christ.

As we ended off the day with the reminder of the analogy of the vines and branches in John 15, we are reminded and challenged to continually draw close to God, without whom we can truly do nothing. January 18<sup>th</sup> is the beginning- the beginning of a new process of walking with Jesus and partnering with Him to do what is humanly impossible to achieve without the handprint of God in it- The Great Commission.