

reach

Summer Edition | Issue 5



“For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.” - (Isaiah 9:6 NKJV)



Reach Community Church

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CHURCH SERVICE

Celebration Service • Sunday | 10am - 12pm

Chinese Service runs concurrently with the English Service in a separate room

REACH Kids • Sunday | 11am - 12pm

MONTHLY MINISTRY & PRAYER

First Friday Of The Month • 7.30pm - 9.30pm

BIBLE STUDY

Young Adults • Wednesday | 7.30pm - 9.30pm

University & Youth Groups • Friday | 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Family • Friday | 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Break for December and January, will resume in February

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Praise Dance • Thursday | 10am - 12pm

**MOPS (Mothers of Pre-schoolers) • Every 1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesday |
10am - 12pm**

Ladies' Meeting • Quarterly

Men's Breakfast • Quarterly

Break for December and January, will resume in February

REACHING UP! REACHING OUT! REACHING ALL!

Welcome

to the fifth issue of Reach Community Church newsletter.

The highlights of this issue: more helpful tips on children's dental issues; fascinating reflection on the trip to Israel; insightful analysis of Safe Schools program; and a touching letter from a father.



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I will give you rest



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More Character Building

Jesus said, "I will give you rest."

A letter from a father

Dear Chris,

My child, it's been a while since we last communicated to each other. I choose to write this letter because there's so much I wanted to tell you but find it hard to do so in person. As you know, when I retired 6 months ago, your mum and I had so many plans for the future, so many things we wanted to do, so many places we wanted to visit. However, the sudden passing of your mum 3 months ago has turned my world upside down. Chris, you've always displayed remarkable equanimity in difficult times, but I know this has also affected you deeply.

I will not elaborate the turmoil within me in the last 3 months; however, recently I came across this Bible passage, I was alight with hope, and I pray that it will also encourage you. ***"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).***

Chris, you might not remember this, when I was your age, and you just started school, we went to an Easter Retreat. Each adult was given a bible passage to memorise, these were the exact verses for me. I wish I had been more diligent in putting them into practice then. Over the years, I had laboured and toiled, trying to climb the corporate ladder, to gain respect

and status in the company, and to pursue worldly gains. I set aside many things I wanted to do, things I knew I ought to do, places I wanted to take your mum to, reasoning naively that I could accomplish them when I retire, but alas, how I wish I could turn back the time.

As you know, I'd never been an avid Bible reader. I thought the Bible insipid and filled with arcane details, suitable only for the pious. However, I now realise the issue is my own attitude. ***When we read with closed mind and hardened heart, the Bible makes very little impact on our life.*** I want to expound this passage to you as I understood it, and pray that it'll make a difference to your life.

When Jesus said, "Come to me", He invited us to come, not to a place, nor an activity or event, but to HIM. What does that mean? It means to spend time with Him, to build a personal relationship with Him, by reading the Bible, by praying, by having fellowship with the saints, and by saturating our minds with His teachings. Chris, I remember when you were a toddler, you used to come to me for everything, and often, for nothing, just sitting on my lap, dozing off. As you grew older and became more independent, it had become a rare event. ***When I read this passage, I realised that to come to Jesus, we need to come trustingly as a little child, with a childlike and humble heart, without any preconceived agenda.***

Jesus invited "all who labor and are heavy laden" to come to Him. I learned that in Jesus' time, Israelites were burdened by the legalism of the Pharisees, they were forced to follow many man-made rules. As a result, following God was a burden to them. Today, people are less burdened by this type of legalism; however, we are burdened by the urge to gain and to pursue more; the burdens of sins and guilt; the fear and anxiety of not measuring up; the pain of physical illness, the list goes on. Chris, I see my younger self in you, and especially in the last 3 months, you seemed to have "buried" yourself in your works. I implore you not to let this surreptitiously exact a toll on the more important things in life.

Jesus promised that "I will give you rest," and, "you will find rest for your souls." Rest doesn't mean being idle. However, **as we rest in God, the meaning of our works will change;** it will be transformed from futile effort into spiritual productivity and purpose. Finding rest in God will help us to be more effective in what we do; it will also help us to rest our souls from the burdens of grief, fear and anxiety.

In the past, I did not know how to rest in God, because I did not take up the yoke He offered me. A yoke is a wooden frame that is attached to the heads or necks of two animals so that they can pull a heavy load together. A well-designed yoke allows two animals to work at maximum capacity and efficiency. Jesus asked us to take His yoke, so that He could work alongside us. When two oxen are yoked together, the stronger ox is often yoked with the weaker one. In order to work efficiently, the weaker ox needs to yield to the stronger one, and interestingly, the stronger ox knows

instinctively how to pace the weaker one to its full capacity. In the same way, when we "yoke" with Christ, we still need to put in our effort, but as we submit our wills to His, He will help us to work to our full capacity, with the resultant unbridled joy and fulfillment, rather than discontentment and weariness. In addition, He asked us to learn from Him, who is "gentle and lowly in heart" (humble). **Submission to God requires putting down our pride and our sense of entitlement. Furthermore, without a personal relationship with God, it's impossible to submit to His authority. So, first come to him (personal relationship), then take up His yoke (submission).**

Chris, which part of your life do you need to submit to God? What life decision do you need to make to come to Him, and to take up His yoke? We are each created uniquely, with different callings and purposes on this earth, be true to what God has called you to do, and do it with the full knowledge that He is with you. **There is no higher accolade than knowing God, and experiencing His intimate love for us.**

Lastly, please do not be anxious about me. I'm assured that God is with me during this trying time. His grace is sufficient for me. I look forward to see you and your family during this coming holiday season.

Lovingly,
Your dad

More Teething Tips!

By Dr Whiskey Yim

In REACH issue 3, Melbourne dentist Dr Yim gave us tips on oral hygiene for young children with baby teeth. In this issue, he addresses more “teething” issues for older children.

Eruption of adult teeth

Although baby teeth generally shed at 6-7 years old, it is not unusual to still have a full set of baby teeth at eight years old. Consult a dentist if you are concerned, X-ray might be ordered to check the position of un-erupted teeth.

It is best to let loose baby teeth fall out on its own. If a loose baby tooth does not fall out immediately, avoid forceful tactics such as yanking it out with a string. If the roots have not fully resorbed, a violent pull might snap the tooth, and cause avoidable pain and infection.

Occasionally, an adult tooth erupts before the baby tooth has shed. In most cases, the baby tooth will fall out within a few days or weeks. It is usually not necessary to extract the baby tooth which causes unnecessary distress to young kids. See a dentist if the baby tooth has not shed after two or three months.

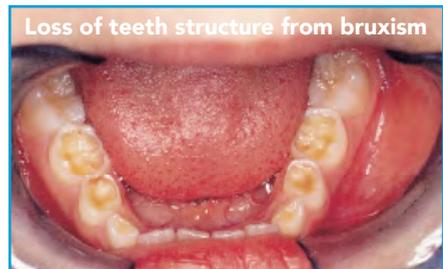
Thumb / Fingers Sucking

Children generally will stop thumb or fingers sucking between two and four years old. Children who continue to suck after their adult teeth have erupted are at risk of crooked teeth (open bite). Speech development may also be affected.



Behavioural strategies, such as a reward system, can be used to discourage thumb sucking e.g. sticker chart, add a sticker on the days the child does not suck his or her thumb, once a certain number of stickers are earned, offer a reward.

In some extreme cases, an appliance can be used to stop thumb sucking. See dentist for advice if your child still suck his or her thumb by the end of first year at school.



Teeth grinding (bruxism)

This is an involuntary clenching of jaw and gnashing of teeth, often during sleep. It is relatively common and usually does not require any treatment. Emotional stress may cause teeth grinding. Finding out and resolving any underlying stress might help. For older children and adolescents, dentists may suggest a custom-fitted appliance to be worn during sleep, to help to prevent damage to their permanent teeth.

Crooked teeth (malocclusion)

Two common terms used by dentists:

- Occlusion (bite) = the contact of upper and lower teeth during chewing or at rest.
- Malocclusion = “bad bite” i.e. misalignment of teeth and jaws.

Malocclusion can cause the following problems:

1. Cosmetic issue affecting self-esteem.
2. Teeth function, causing difficulty with biting or chewing.
3. Dental hygiene, it is more difficult to clean crowded or overlapping teeth, resulting in dental problems such as tooth decay and gum problem.
4. Teeth wearing, improper teeth contact can cause abnormal pattern of teeth wearing.
5. Speech function.

These problems can be improved when the malocclusion is corrected by orthodontic treatment.

Orthodontic treatment

In general, optimal age for orthodontic treatment is about 11 to 12 years old. However, some orthodontic problems may be apparent at 7 to 9 years old, and orthodontic assessment can be sought at an earlier age. In some cases, early treatment may prevent problems from worsening and avoid requiring more complicated treatment later.

Traditionally, orthodontic treatment is for children and teenagers. However, adults may benefit from it as well. Duration of treatment is usually longer for adults, because their jaw bones are denser, and hence their teeth are harder to "move".

Initial orthodontic consultation usually involves gathering information, taking dental impression for construction of plaster models, taking photos and X-rays. Advices on treatment options will also be given, including different types of orthodontic techniques and devices, optimal timing to start treatment, expected duration of treatment and cost.

Some people might need to have their adult teeth extracted to create space for teeth alignment. It is not uncommon to have four teeth extraction, one from each corner of mouth.

Orthodontic treatment usually takes 18 to 24 months, but can be shorter or longer. At the end of active treatment, braces are removed and retaining appliances (retainers) are worn to hold the teeth steady in their new position. These can be either removable appliances or fixed wires behind the teeth. They play an important role to prevent teeth from moving out of alignment. Regular dental check up is important during and after the course of treatment.





Possible complications of orthodontic treatment

While orthodontic treatment can improve dental health, complications may occur.

Gum Inflammation

In most cases, it is not serious and will resolve after removal of braces. In some cases, inflammation may persist and develop into infection. Regular dental check up and cleaning are important preventative measures.

Decalcification of tooth enamel

Tooth enamel can sometimes be weakened (decalcification), which leads to caries. This is often caused by poor oral hygiene and diet (e.g. consumption of food or drink with high sugar content).

Mouth ulcers

This is especially when braces are newly placed. Fortunately, they tend to heal quickly.

Tooth root or pulp complications

Shortening of the root of tooth and irritation of the pulp (which contains

nerves and blood supply) may occur. This is very uncommon. Rarely, root canal treatment or extraction might be needed.

Allergy

Rarely, allergy to the orthodontic materials (e.g. nickel, acrylic) may occur.

Foreign body ingestion or inhalation

Loose appliances might be swallowed or inhaled into airway.

Treatment failure

As with any medical or dental treatment, success rate is not 100%. In addition, treatment may take longer than expected or relapse can occur. Sometimes, treatment is not completed as earlier removal of appliance is necessary for various reasons. Relapse can occur if retainer is not worn at the end of the treatment. In addition, though not a treatment failure or relapse, further treatment might be needed as teeth continue to move during one's lifetime.

Exploring Israel.....

Tracing the Footsteps of Jesus Christ

By Pastor Victor Soo

Crystal and I, together with Felicia Chai and Yuan Wen Liao from church were in Israel and Jordan for a two-week trip in September this year. We joined a small guided tour with a total of 23 people. We were very blessed to have a Messianic Jew who was most diligent and passionate to highlight the biblical significance of each spot we visited. He turned our program into a personal Bible Study tour, and the experience greatly enhanced my understanding of God's Hand in the events of the people and places in the Bible. My faith has surely increased as a result of this visit as a pilgrim.

After over 27 hours of flight, we arrived into Tel Aviv. Upon arrival, we immediately embarked on our tour. My first impression of the place was it is arid, rocky and hilly, and the land did not appear to be arable. This could not be the place of flowing milk and honey. Yet as I traversed across this land, I could say that God has indeed honoured His Promise to bless this nation. Many dry areas are green with palm trees and our famous export of eucalyptus trees thrive in creeks. The land teems with abundance of food derived from pastoral farming and agriculture. The kibbutzim system of collective farming and business has produced much prosperity to its citizens. Today, besides technology, Israel is an exporter of many fruits including bananas, pomelos and mangoes to Europe.

Another daily observation here was the presence of security personnel with a higher concentration in the major tourist attractions. The army and police forces were friendly and helpful. There was not a moment I felt unsafe. However, the traffic

can be chaotic as the streets in the tourist hotspots are narrow (two-donkey wide is the standard), especially when foreigners like us seasonally flood into these areas. Tourists were mainly from Russia, Ukraine, China, Taiwan, Indonesia, South America, Australia and New Zealand, intermingling with Orthodox Jews with their long black coats, curly locks of hair and black wide-brimmed hats, especially in Jerusalem. Most vendors could guess our countries of origin, and solicited our business with common greetings in those languages.

The places that made great impressions upon me were:

1. Mount Carmel and Tel Megiddo

Here, Elijah single-handedly defeated 850 prophets who served gods who could not deliver their claims. Elijah chose this mountain as this was at a busy north-south crossroad known by all who travelled the land. Nearby at Megiddo, archaeology has uncovered 25 kingdoms that had settled here to strategically claim Israel, but then were each overthrown. **Here, God spoke to me that no kingdom of man lasts except the Kingdom of God.**

2. Nazareth Biblical Village

This site is a careful re-construction that took us into the times of Jesus. We learned of the ancient construction and agriculture methods, viewed the culture and lifestyles of the people then, and saw how olive oil was then extracted. Carpentry skills were demonstrated, and I learned that carpenters were also stone-masons during those days as they were builders. It was an eye-opener, giving me revelation through the olive press, and the life of Jesus.



3. Around Galilee

The boat ride in the Sea of Galilee turned out to be a time of fervent worship, with the skipper leading the praise. He was a good singer who produced many local albums to his name. The vista opens up to landscapes sacred for thousands of years. Jesus walked on water here, calmed the storm, and showed His Disciples where to catch fish. Around here, Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount. I found out that the Sea of Tiberius, Genneseret and the Sea of Galilee were all the same place. Jesus did much ministry in this region which includes neighbouring cities such as Capernaum, Tiberius and Bethsaida. I also saw the ruins of Capernaum as prophesied.

4. River Jordan and the Dead Sea

Surprisingly, this is a small river and the only one closest to Jerusalem, being about 30km away. To be baptised in Jesus' time, one had to walk this distance through the desert. But recent torrential rains raised the water level to flood levels many metres higher, proving the account of Joshua. Yuan Wen and Felicia got baptised here. I had long read about the Dead Sea, and finally, I was there to personally experience the supposedly therapeutic mud-bath that rejuvenates the skin. Hmm... I need something more powerful! I dipped into the Dead Sea, and for the first time, swam without fear of drowning. Later it was off to the Qumran Caves. It was powerful to know how Bedouin shepherds made one of the greatest discoveries of our times - The Dead Sea Scrolls! These documents attested the accuracies of our Bible.





River Jordan

5. Temple Mount, Southern Steps, and Hezekiah's Tunnel

Visiting the Western Wall was an experience! This was a spot that symbolised Jerusalem for me. I joined the crowd to pray, and slipped my written prayer into the cracks of a two-thousand-year-old structure. To the Jews, this was the second holiest site on earth after the Holy of Holies. The Steps was a spot where it was believed that Jesus and even Paul would have taught or preached. The baths here could have been used to baptise the first 3,000 who were saved. It was surreal to know I was sitting where Jesus and many of the great Apostles paced their steps to be at the Temple. It was also fantastic to see the City of David, the birth place of Jerusalem, and the three valleys wrapped around this city and understand their biblical relevance. It was hot even during early autumn, and the walk inside Hezekiah's Tunnel with flowing fresh water was very refreshing. This was a secret water supply of the city since the days of King David.



6. Jerusalem and Surroundings

One of the highlights to be here was to understand why Jesus prophesied, agonised and later ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives. This was a spot known to all the people of this city, and all happenings would be witnessed here. At Gethsemane, meaning "olive press", Jesus wept and prayed before His betrayal. Bethesda is "House of Mercy" where large numbers of infirmed people waited to be healed by the waters believed to contain miraculous healing power. At this location, Jesus healed a paralytic of 38 years. I enjoyed being inside St. Anne's Church where we had time to ourselves to worship The Lord. Amazing Grace was beautiful as the acoustic properties of this building turned our rendition



Western Wall

Reach Travel

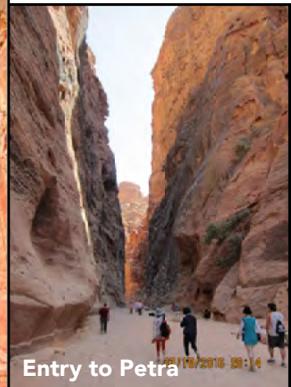
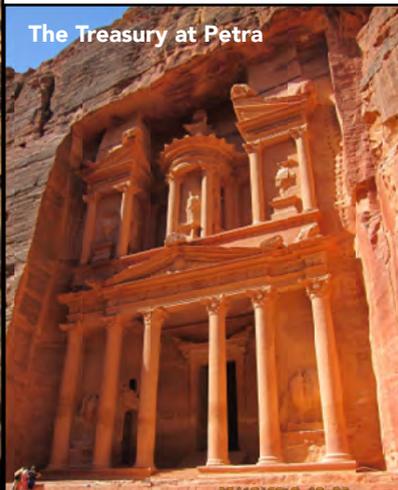
into that of angels'. **Our walk in the Old City along the Via Dolorosa (The Way of Suffering) believed to be the path Jesus walked on the way to His Crucifixion, was sad but comforting, for we know He did this in order to deliver us The Good News.** This tour led to sights and smell of the Jewish, Muslim, and Armenian Quarters of the ancient areas of the city, built mainly of rocks that witnessed generations of war and peace, love and hate, destruction and resurrection.

7. Petra

The city of Petra was called "Sela" in the Old Testament. Both Petra and Sela mean "rock", an appropriate name since this city is carved into sandstone cliffs. It is an engineering marvel achieved by the Edomites who established this settlement in the middle of the desert. Water, a most important source of life, was plentiful here as supply and irrigation were evident everywhere until now. The people from this place controlled the commerce route, and had

survived for longer than most kingdoms. Today, Petra lies in ruins, in fulfilment of the prophetic word, "Edom also shall be an astonishment; everyone who goes by it will be astonished and will hiss at all its plagues. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbours," says the Lord, "No one shall remain there, nor shall a son of man dwell in it" (Jeremiah 49:17-18).

This was a trip of a life-time; having witnessed the accounts stated in The Bible from Dan to Beersheba, and from the River Jordan on the east to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. This span of real estate was given as The Promised Land to Israel. It was simply exhilarating to witness and know all that had been written in God's Word as being true. I now know River Jordan did flood when Joshua had to cross it, and had seen the possibility of Moses passing the Red Sea, and learned that archaeological research continues to affirm all these.





Is Safe Schools Program the right anti-bullying program for Victorian schools?

By Dr LeeChyi Lam and Dr Moira Eastman

Safe schools program (SSP) is a national program endorsed by the Australian Government as an anti-bullying program. The stated objectives are: 1) to reduce homophobic and transphobic behaviour and intersex prejudice, 2) to increase support for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, school staff and families.

The issue of bullying at school

School bullying is no doubt a major issue for Australian students. It is identified by students to be one of the two most important social issues across Australia¹.

The complexity of the causes and effects of bullying is beyond the scope of this article. However, it is well known that students are being bullied for reasons other than their sexual orientation or identity, including obesity, race, religious belief, physical disabilities, socioeconomic status etc. Safe Schools Coalition Victoria (SSCV) claimed that 10% or more people in Australia are same sex attracted (according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, same-sex couples accounted for 0.7% of all couple families in 2011); 27.4% of children aged 5-17 years were overweight or obese in 2014-15², and well over half of these students are being bullied daily at school³, which means that **there are a much higher number of students being bullied for their size than for their sexual orientation or identity.**

In addition, those who bully do so “to dominate and control the behaviour of peers”, and unfortunately “frequently have high social status.” Bullies also have a high perception of themselves from the social feedback they receive. Their bullying behaviours are rarely challenged by their peers; and although bullies are not necessarily well-liked, for social status and physical safety reasons, their peers are more likely to side with the bullies than with their victims⁴. These findings suggest that in order to combat bullying, it is important to address the characteristics of the bullies and the responses of people who witness the bullying. **Bullies bully for reasons other than their attitude towards their victims.**

Anti-bullying program

It is challenging to evaluate the effectiveness of any anti-bullying programs. A meta-analysis evaluating the effect of school-based anti-bullying programs found that training in emotional control (teaching students strategies to control emotional problems such as anger, anxiety and depression), and peer counselling (training students to be peer supporters for those involved in bullying) maybe the most effective methods of intervention. Another important factor is the establishment of a school policy on bullying⁵.

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics

2. Australian Bureau of Statistics

3. www.obesityaction.org

4. Bullying in Schools: The Power of Bullies and the Plight of Victims, Annual Review of Psychology, 2014, 65:159-85

5. A meta-analysis of the effect of school-based anti-bullying programs, Journal of Child Health Care, 2015, 19(2): 136-153

Reach Viewpoint

In Australia, although it is mandatory for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy, about 25% of Victorian schools do not have a specific anti-bullying policy separate from other policies. In addition, few policies stated how a teacher should respond to an incident of bullying, and even fewer mentioned the role of other school staff⁶.

It is evident that Victorian Schools fall short in anti-bullying programs. **What we need is a comprehensive and evidence-based anti-bullying program, not a program targeting only one specific, minority group of victims.**

Is SSP an anti-bullying program?

1. The Content of SSP

This program is designed for Year 7 and 8 students as part of their health and physical education studies. 4 of the 8 lessons of its main resource "All Of Us" teach students irrelevant sexual experiences (Lesson 2 Same Sex Attracted Experiences, Lesson 3 Bisexual Experiences, Lesson 4 Transgender Experiences, Lesson 5 Intersex Experiences). In one of the lessons "Stepping Out", students are asked to 'imagine themselves in the role of a young person who is aged 16 years or older, who is going out with someone they are really into.' Half of these students are then asked to imagine themselves going out with someone of the same sex, and to explore how that affects their experience. An anti-bullying program?

An independent review of the program (by Dr William Loudon) found at least three areas that are inappropriate for the targeted students⁷. In response to the review, the federal government agreed to take action, and make new recommendations for the program⁸. Disappointingly, the Victorian government

refused to follow these recommendations. Victoria's Education Minister James Merlino was reported to state that "the Safe Schools program content had already been approved by curriculum experts and would remain intact". **Why would the Victorian government ignore an expert review, and insist on adopting a program which is thought to be flawed? What is the hidden agenda?**

In addition, in response to the critics of SSP, the Victorian premier Mr Daniel Andrews claimed that "he received his policy advice from experts, not from bigots"⁹. Mr Andrews called people bigots simply because they expressed their criticisms of the program. Who is being a bully and a bigot? And which experts did the government seek in designing this program?

2. The People Behind SSP

It is disconcerting that an anti-bullying program is not designed by experts in this area; many of the resource materials are produced by Minus18, a youth led organisation for gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans youth. Hence, the experts turn out to be "experts" with an interest in advancing gender diversity in children. Furthermore, the manager and the co-founder of the program, Roz Ward, has been reported to claim that this program is not about anti-bullying, but is "part of a strategy to radically change society", and that "the homosexual cannot win liberation without a general sexual liberation". In other words, **SSP is being pushed into Australian schools under the disguise of being an anti-bullying program, with the hidden agenda of radical sexual revolution. Can we trust that once the program is implemented, there will not be subsequent increased pressure for more radical sexualisation of our children?**

6. Content analysis of school anti-bullying policies: a comparison between NZ and Victoria, Australia, Health Promotion Journal of Australia, 2011:22(3)

7. Review of Appropriateness and Efficacy of the Safe Schools Coalition Australia Program Resources, William Loudon, 11 March 2016

8. <http://ministers.education.gov.au/birmingham/statement-safe-schools-coalition>

9. Daniel Andrews defies critics of Safe Schools anti-bullying program, The Australian, May 15, 2016

3. The Implementation of SSP

The forcefulness of the implementation of SSP is also disturbing. Many of the topics are being introduced to children who are too young to be able to handle them, and yet parents are not allowed to say no to this program. The Victorian government is determined to make this program compulsory in all Victorian government secondary schools by the end of 2018, and parents have no right to withdraw their child from it. **The determination of the Victorian government to take away parents' right to educate their children on gender identity and sexuality is alarming!** Even when the federal government withdrew funding for Victoria's SSP after it refused to adopt the recommended changes, Mr Andrews did not relent but declared he would fund the program fully using the State budget. There is even plan to extend this program to primary schools.

Ironically, according to Mr Bill Shorten, "If it's a matter of trusting Mr Turnbull or Senator Bernardi or some of the others like Mr Christensen from Dawson, or the teachers of Australia, I would pick the teachers of Australia with the welfare of my kids." **How about trusting parents with the welfare of their kids?**

We cannot solve bullying by bullying and yet the Safe Schools agenda is being pushed onto schools (and parents and students) in a bullying manner. Those who have expressed concerns have been labelled homophobes, extremists, and bigots.

4. The Consequence of SSP

SSP also contains materials which encourage young people to step out as same sex attracted or gender diverse. Results from research studies show that prepubertal gender dysphoria persists into adolescence or adulthood in only a minority of children¹⁰. In addition, sexual exploration, experimentation and discovery take place during adolescence. Confusion and uncertainty are part of the process. A study showed that adolescents' uncertainty about their sexual orientation decreases from 26% at 12 years old to 5% at 17 years old¹¹. Adolescents may describe same-sex attractions and fantasies but do not identify themselves as homosexual, and later mature into happy heterosexual adults. **Therefore, encouraging young children to cross dress, and manipulating young people to come out as same sex attracted during this vulnerable period will only cause more confusion later in life.**

It is evident that SSP is not the anti-bullying program Australian students need. The issue of bullying needs to be thought out much more carefully. Schools and parents have demonstrated in the past an ability to develop skilful and compassionate strategies for complex and highly conflicted issues. **With an appropriate time frame parent bodies and teacher and principal bodies will work out a way to handle the issues that SSP claims to address, without bullying schools and teachers and parents who see things differently.**

10. Psychosexual outcome of gender-dysphoric children, J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry. 2008;47(12):1413

11. Demography of sexual orientation in adolescents, Pediatrics. 1992;89(4 Pt2):714

A Child's Cry for Help!

Do you have any pressing life concerns or puzzling life questions? Write to us at reachforum@reachcc.org, and we will try to address and answer them.

Dear REACH,

Thank you for your article "My Conscience Rules!" published in the September issue of REACH. I enjoyed reading it, it's funny, and reminded me that obedience pleases God. I have always tried to be good, at home and at school, but things do not always go well. I'm not sure if you're the right person to write to, but I hope you can give me some advices. I grew up in a Christian home, and I'm now a Year 7 student at a public school in Melbourne. I've never been popular and I don't have many friends. I feel different from other kids of my age. Many of them swear and do things that I don't feel are right to do. Sometimes when we disagree, I tell them about Christ, which makes them tease me, call me names, and exclude me from their games. This makes me very sad. I'm not sure what to do. I don't want to tell my parents, as I don't want them to worry about me. I told my big sister, she is a good Christian and I know I can trust her. She told me not to worry about it, and that it is blessed to suffer for Christ. I don't feel blessed, only miserable and confused, why does God allow this to happen to me? It makes me nervous about going to school. What should I do?

Sincerely,
Miserable child

Dear Child of God,

I hope you don't mind me changing your name from "Miserable child" to "Child of God". I think you're truly an amazing person – mature, sensible, responsible, kind and considerate. Your parents are very blessed to have you, and I can see that you will do well in whatever you choose to do in the future. I hope the following suggestions will be helpful:

1. It is not your fault that other kids are nasty towards you, bullies bully because they have problems that they need to deal with.
2. Bullies like to see their victims react strongly towards them, so the more you react emotionally, the more they desire to provoke you. Often, it's best to ignore them and just walk away, with your head held up high.
3. Although the Bible did mention that it is blessed to suffer in the name of Christ (Luke 6:22), it is not wrong to stand up for yourself. In fact, Jesus did just that when someone struck him unreasonably. Jesus answered him, "If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong; but if what I said is right, why do you strike me?" (John 18:23). You did right when you told other kids about Christ, and urged them to do the right things, so you can look them in the eyes and not be intimidated. Be confident, be assertive. Remember, defending yourself is not the same as taking revenge. Those bullies have absolutely no power over you.
5. Do not seek approval from people who do not respect your God. Their opinions do not matter in your life, not now, and not in the future.
6. Stay focussed with your studies. Right now, being popular and having many friends might seem important to you, but I can assure you that it's far better to have few friends who respect you and share the same passion as you, than to lose yourself in a company of people with meaningless purpose in life.
7. I encourage you to talk to your parents about this. They will be your good moral support.
8. I would have loved to tell you to report this to the school authorities. However, I have heard of incidents where teachers from public schools "bully" Christian students; without knowing your teacher, I'm a bit hesitant to give that advice. It's best to discuss this with your parents.

Lastly, God did not cause this to happen to you, it is the result of the foolishness of others. Rest assured that God is with you and He will help you overcome this. When you do and look back, you'll see that when you respond to "sufferings" in a manner that pleases God, you will become a better person, and will see the glory of God in your life. I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,
REACH

Reach Recipe



Pandan Chiffon Cake

By InChyi

Ingredient A:

Egg yolk x 8
Vegetable oil 170mL
Sugar 80g
Plain flour (sifted) 140g
Baking powder 2 tsp
Salt ½ tsp
Coconut milk 170mL
Pandan Essence (available in most Asian grocery shops) few drops

Ingredient B:

Egg White x 8
Sugar 80g
Cream of tartar 1tsp
Equipment: 21cm tube pan (see picture), it is best to use a two-piece tube pan with a removable bottom.



Methods:

1. Preheat oven 170°C.
2. Whisk ingredient A together.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk ingredient B until white and stiff.
4. Gently fold B into A.
5. Pour into an ungreased 21cm tube pan. If you wish, line a sheet of baking paper on the base for easier removal of cake later.
6. Bake for 40-50 minutes. Insert a skewer in the centre of the cake and it should come out clean.
7. Take out the cake and invert the pan immediately. Leave the cake to cool completely in an upside down position before taking it out.
8. To remove the cake from the pan, run a knife around the side and the centre of the pan and the base (if not lined with baking paper).

Variations:

A variation of orange, coffee, or chocolate chiffon cake can be made using the same recipe. With orange chiffon cake, replace coconut milk with orange juice, and add zest from 2 oranges. With coffee or chocolate chiffon cakes, replace coconut milk with evaporated milk, and melt coffee and chocolate powder, respectively, in small portion of warm evaporated milk.

More Character Building

Each of the listed words can be found in the grid: across, down, and diagonally, including backwards. Mark the letters of each word as you find it. Letters may be used more than once. The unused letters will spell out the solution.

S	G	H	P	U	N	C	T	U	A	L	I	T	Y	D
S	E	Y	O	M	S	A	I	S	U	H	T	N	E	S
E	N	T	D	S	E	C	U	R	I	T	Y	P	B	S
N	T	I	E	T	P	C	U	I	L	D	E	A	S	E
I	L	R	T	R	N	I	I	I	N	N	G	T	S	N
L	E	E	E	U	C	E	T	T	D	H	A	I	E	S
R	N	C	R	O	R	A	M	A	S	C	T	E	N	U
E	E	N	M	N	E	R	B	T	L	U	B	N	E	O
D	S	I	I	O	E	I	C	H	N	I	J	C	V	I
R	S	S	N	H	L	R	I	S	T	E	T	E	I	T
O	A	V	A	I	L	A	B	I	L	I	T	Y	G	U
G	R	A	T	E	F	U	L	N	E	S	S	N	R	A
L	I	Y	I	E	C	N	E	R	E	F	E	D	O	C
K	T	H	O	R	O	U	G	H	N	E	S	S	F	C
S	S	E	N	E	V	I	S	A	U	S	R	E	P	E

AVAILABILITY

DEFERENCE

ENTHUSIASM

GRATEFULNESS

JUSTICE

PERSUASIVENESS

SINCERITY

CAUTIOUSNESS

DEPENDABILITY

FORGIVENESS

HONOUR

ORDERLINESS

PUNCTUALITY

THOROUGHNESS

CONTENTMENT

DETERMINATION

GENTLENESS

HOSPITALITY

PATIENCE

SECURITY

Solution:

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Reaching Up!
Reaching Out!
Reaching All!

reach

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