

reach

Winter Edition | Issue • 7



*"Those who dwelt in
a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone."
- Isaiah 9:2*



Reach Community Church

2/177 Beavers Road
Northcote VIC 3070

Tel: (03) 9481 6889

Email: info@reachcc.org

www.reachcc.org

Pastor: Victor Soo

Church Administrator: Sharon Oen

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 • Monday | 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Friday | 7.30pm - 9.30pm

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Praise Dance • Thursday | 10am - 12pm

MOPS (Mothers of Pre-schoolers) • Every 2nd & 4th Friday

| 10am - 12pm

Ladies' Meeting • Quarterly

Men's Breakfast • Quarterly

Welcome

to the seventh issue of Reach Community Church newsletter. How can you be rooted in faith? What are some Godly characters? How do you practise gratefulness? Find the answers in this issue of REACH, plus the testimony of a mother, the hand of God during a mission trip...



SEEKING ALLAH,
FINDING JESUS

A Devout Muslim Encounters Christianity

4_

Reach Message

Rooted in Faith

8_

Reach Testimony

The Maze of Motherhood

10_

Reach Teaser

Godly Character

11_

Reach Character

Practise Gratefulness

12_

Reach Mission

Genesis is Genuine

16_

Reach Reflection

Flying or Falling

17_

Reach Book Review

Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus

18_

Reach Recipe

Lemon Slice

19_

Reach Word Search

Rooted in Faith



News headline: "Persecuted Christians suffer 'worst year yet,' mostly under Islam. In 18 Muslim nations, '100 per cent of Christians experience persecution,' states report"¹. Worldwide, numerous Christians are under extreme persecution, yet they remain strong in their faith. On the other hand, in our "free" society, we see many Christians who leave their faith after growing up in a Christian family or after serving in the church for many years. What makes some Christians so firm in their faith despite persecution, while others so precarious and unable to withstand the slightest trial in life?

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus' apostles asked Him to increase their faith, and He replied, **"If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."** (Luke 17:6)

What does it mean to have faith like a grain of mustard seed? Why did Jesus make an analogy between a seed and faith?

For a seed to grow into a plant, two main processes are necessary: the initial germination (or sprouting), followed by the ongoing growth. What does a seed need in order to germinate and grow into a plant? And how does this relate to the Christian faith? First of all, time (and hence patience) is essential in this process. After sprouting, a plant needs **food**, **water** and **light** to sustain its growth.

Food = the Word of God

In the Bible, the Word of God is often referred as food:

But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Matthew 4:4)

Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart. (Jeremiah 15:16a)

Water = the Holy Spirit

In the same way, water represents the Holy Spirit:

"Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:38-39)

For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. (Isaiah 44:3)



Light = Jesus Christ

Lastly, Jesus is the light who has come down to the world:

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. (John 12:46)

In another word, in order to grow in faith, we need to have a deep understanding of the truth of the Word of God, the guiding of the Holy Spirit and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, not every seed grows into a fruitful plant. In the Parable of the Sower recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 13, there are three possible conditions (issues) in which seeds do not grow into plants to produce grain (or fruit):

The heart issue

1. Seeds which "fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them" (v4) – these represent the people who hear the word of the kingdom and do not understand it (v19a).

What does it mean to understand the Word of God? True understanding inevitably leads to obedience and action. However, when we refuse to obey, either due to unwillingness or a lack of faith, for example, when God's Word is contrary to our desire, belief or understanding, it leads to hardened hearts towards God's Word.

By faith, Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. (Hebrews 11:8)

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. (Hebrews 3:12)

Blessed is the one who fears the Lord always, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity. (Proverbs 28:14)

Challenges: Do you have a sense of awe or wonder when you listen to or read God's Word? How has God's Word changed your life? Are you willing to change a life decision based on God's Word, even when it is contrary to your desire or understanding?

The mind issue

2. Seeds which "fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away" (v5-6) – these represent individual who "hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away" (v20-21).

There is nothing wrong with our emotion. However, when we base our faith purely on emotion, without deep understanding of the truth, our faith is 'shallow', and we become disappointed and fall away in the face of the travails of life. Christian faith is not just about 'feeling good' but is based on truths – the truths that Jesus died on the cross, that He resurrected from death, that He claimed to be the Son of God, and hence has the authority to forgive sins and to redeem our lives. For these reasons, true faith understands the sorrow of sins, and the need for repentance.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. (Romans 8:5)

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:13)

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. (James 1:12, NIV)

Challenges: Do you base your faith on the number of 'worldly' blessings you receive from God? Do you have the attitude that Christians should not suffer, or those who suffer are being punished by God? Do you doubt God when you see "good people" suffer? What is your attitude when approaching God in prayer?

The will issue

3. Seeds which "fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them" (v7) – these represent the people who hear the Word, "but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful" (v22).

Sometimes the cares of the world can be masked by good works, for example, building a 'professional' worship team, bringing up 'successful' children. When striving to achieve something in life becomes more important than a personal relationship with God, we are prone to distraction, derailment and deception.

Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. (Matthew 26:41)

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. (Colossians 2:6-8)



Challenges: Does worldly pursuit (e.g. raising your children, building a career or ministry) consume so much of your time and energy that you have no time for God? Do you worry about your family (or work) so much that you find it hard to be at peace with God? Is looking good to other people more important to you than obeying God?

The Good Soil

Lastly, **“other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty” (Matthew 13:8)**. In another word, a rooted faith is one that bears fruit in the Kingdom of God.

It is important to understand that the basis of Christian faith is the God Almighty through Jesus Christ, who is omnipotent (all-powerful), omnipresent (all-present), and omniscient (all-knowing); so we are never alone in this journey of faith. Instead of relying on our own strength, we are to fix our eyes on Jesus,

who is “the founder and perfecter of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2). As soon as we take our eyes off Him, we will fall into the traps of developing an untouchable hardened heart, unteachable meagre mind, and untamable warring will.

So, in order to be rooted in faith to bear fruit, we need to **be nourished by the Word of God, guided by the Holy Spirit, and live by the light of Jesus Christ**. In addition, we need to consciously choose **to soften our hearts to obey the Word of God, to open our minds to receive the Wonder of God** as recorded in the Bible, **and to submit our will to do the Work of God**. And when we are rooted in faith, our faith will be reflected by the way we live our life.

Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought for it does not cease to bear fruit. (Jeremiah 17:7-8)

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)



The Maze of Motherhood

By Anita Hua

There is a saying which my mum used to say to me (too frequently):

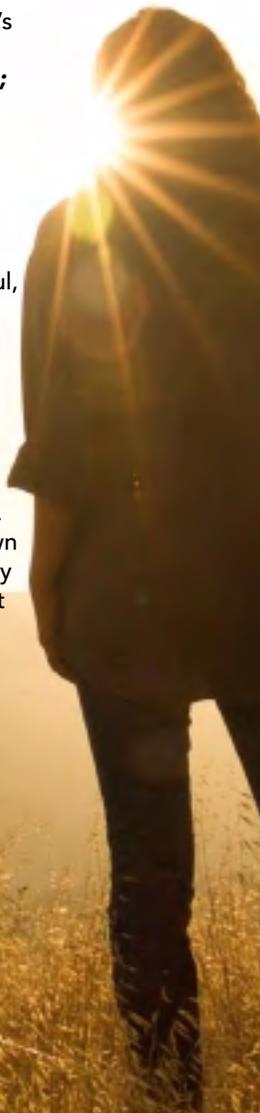
“you’ll never know what it is like to be a mother until you actually become one.”



How true those words became when I gave birth to my first child, Daniel. During that time I asked myself, “What kind of mother will I become?” I certainly felt that I wanted to become a better person as I would be looking after someone forever and my role as a mother would influence this child. I realised very soon

how difficult it is to live out God’s word (**Proverbs 22:6** *“Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it”*).

Raising a child is hard work. I struggled with the daily task of figuring out what a crying newborn wanted. It was stressful, exhausting and there were days when I felt like I was treading on very thin ice. It was difficult for me to enjoy Daniel. All I could think of was the endless cycle of feeding him (its difficulties), working out his sleep habits and changing a truckload of nappies. I was learning to let go of my own expectations and to take one day at a time. I was also learning not to be anxious about tomorrow



(Matthew 6:34 "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble"). Every day was a new day, as I learnt to trust God in the daily things.

My personal struggle with nursing and learning to care for Daniel led me to understand how lonely it could become if I were to go through motherhood on my own. I was very blessed, however, to have found support through my family, friends, local mothers groups and MOPS (Mothers of Pre-schoolers) group held at Reach Community Church (**Psalm 133:1, NIV "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!"**).

Meeting with other mothers of children of Daniel's age, we were able to share our experiences and our journey of motherhood, as well as learning and supporting one another.

Particularly at MOPS, we had many opportunities to discuss and learn the importance of our wellbeing as mothers, not just physical but mental and emotional wellbeing, and also what kind of mothers we can be.

Since having Daniel, I have come to realise the joy of slowing down, leaving house chores to another day, learning not to worry and to just trust God each day. Now that Daniel is nine months old, I feel that I can look back and encourage other new mothers to learn to forgive themselves, to let go of the small things and to enjoy every moment with their small child. When I watch my son, I see glimpses of what God sees in us: a precious child, who requires a lot of work to raise, gets into all sorts of trouble, and yet brings so much joy in those little passing moments that I wouldn't want to miss. Time passes quickly so 'if you're going to walk on thin ice, you might as well dance' (Karin Gillespie).

Reach Community Church is part of a national non-profit organisation, Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) Australia. It caters for the needs of mother, providing a "time-out" from 10am on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month during the school term. Come and join in to be encouraged, supported and enjoy the friendship of other mothers whilst your toddler is being cared for in the MOPPETS program.

Godly Character

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. (Romans 5:3-5)

Match each character with its definition, and reflect upon how you can display these characters in your daily life.

Characters

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|----------|
| Creativity | Deference | Generosity | Humility |
| Joyfulness | Meekness | Love / benevolence | |
| Responsibility | Self-Control | Truthfulness | |

Definitions¹

1. Acknowledging that achievement results from the investment of others in my life
2. Yielding my personal rights and expectations with a desire to serve
3. Maintaining a good attitude, even when faced with unpleasant conditions
4. Carefully managing my resources so I can freely give to those in need
5. Giving to others’ basic needs without having as my motive personal reward
6. Knowing and doing what is expected of me
7. Rejecting wrong desires and doing what is right
8. Earning future trust by accurately reporting past facts
9. Limiting my freedom so I do not offend the tastes of those around me
10. Approaching a need, a task, or an idea from a new perspective

Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are. - John Wooden

The only thing we can take to heaven with us is our character. Our character is all we have to determine what kind of a being we will be for all eternity. It’s what we are that will be tested by fire. Only the qualities of Christ in our character will remain – Joni Eareckson Tada

-
- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 10. Creativity | 9. Deference |
| 6. Responsibility | 5. Love / benevolence |
| 2. Meekness | 1. Humility |
| 3. Joyfulness | |
| 7. Self-Control | |
| 4. Generosity | |
| 8. Truthfulness | |

Answers

¹ The definitions are taken from the Character First! Program, Character Training Institute

Practise Gratefulness

The epidemic of “ungratefulness” has pervasively infiltrated our society, affecting people of all ages, spreading from one generation to the next. Churches are called to respond to the emergency plan to curb its spread. A major component of the plan is to help each individual to develop the character of GRATEFULNESS, starting from home. Here are some practical strategies:

| | |
|--|---|
| G ive thanks in all circumstances. | Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:18) |
| R ecieve and Reflect with thanksgiving, i.e. count your blessings. | For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving. (1 Timothy 4:4) |
| A ppreciate the people around you in a tangible way, e.g. write them a thank you notes. | First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. (Romans 1:8) |
| T hink of others more highly than yourself. | Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. (Philippians 2:3) |
| E mbrace and Expand. Embrace your present life, and expand your perspective beyond your circle of life. | Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border. (1 Chronicles 4:10a) |
| F orgive. | Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32) |
| U ncover the joy in little things. | And there you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your households, in all that you undertake, in which the Lord your God has blessed you. (Deuteronomy 12:7) |
| L end your hand to those in need. | It is well with the man who deals generously and lends. (Psalms 112:5a) |
| N ever compare your life with others. | I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. (Philippians 4:11) |
| E xpress your gratitude often. | O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Psalms 51:15) |
| S low to anger | Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. (Proverbs 19:11) |
| S eek God and Submit to Him | You who seek God, let your hearts revive. (Psalms 69:32b) |

Teaching the Truth: Genesis is Genuine

By Troy Truong

Who would have thought that a registered builder who studied business could be a candidate to defend the Genesis account from a historical and scientific slant?

But God often uses unwitting candidates with unsure hearts in the most unlikely places, to stir unconvinced minds to His uncompromising truth, and reach out to impressionable teens exposed to the unrelenting propaganda of the evolution theory.

Returning to Manila

When I last left the Philippines back in February 2014, I did not know then that it would take me 3 years to return. Much has changed: a new hard-tone president, Uber rides, fast 4G internet and fast public wifi, new public vans, more paved roads and my Visa card widely accepted everywhere!

I arrived at the hotel at 1am for a late snooze and early flight out on the morrow, to General Santos City, deep south of the Philippines.

God's Divine Appointment

General Santos International Airport has got to be the most decrepitated international airport in the cosmos. There, I took two van rides to my destination, Glan, a seaside town an hour's trip from this metropolis.

A number of years earlier, back in my foolhardy backpacking days, I hopped on this particular van route, not having

a clue where it would take me on my intrepid adventures. But on that ride, on that particular day, I sat next to a particular, pleasant, middle-aged lady who was visiting a relative at a particular church in Glan. So I tagged along with her and met Pastor Darius, his wife and their humble church, built of thatched roofing, and odds and ends.



They had served here for over 2 decades, with a small 30-odd congregation, on a parcel of leased land. Ever since, I make it a habit to support this couple every time I come back to Glan. Pastor Darius and his wife have absolutely no source of income, and for decades remain faithful to pastoring this small church. The world may not know them, but God certainly does. To this day, I still believe that the particular ride I took years ago during my gutsy, backpacking days was not particularly particular, but God's intended destination for me then.

Destination Davao City, and to Samal Island

Early the next morning, I woke at 5am by a hundred roosters crowing, right outside my accommodation. Breaking my fast early, I embarked on a 5-hour road trip to Davao City. I have taken this trip many times before, yet I am still awed by its scenic views over the running meadows of abundant natural flora, reminding me of old Pinoy cine classics.



Road trip - General Santos and Davao City

Arriving in Davao City, I took a quick taxi to the ferry terminal to get over to Samal Island on the same old, robust Japanese diesel barge. Samal Island lies a 15 minute trip across the calm waters. A bridge was meant to be built over this shallow body of water, to connect it to the mainland. However, as Philippines politics has it, money got lost somewhere along the way. Without the bridge does help Samal Island retain her natural, small island charm, void of hordes of the big city crowd and traffic. Both Pastor Victor and Pastor Joel were waiting for me at the seaside resort that evening when I arrived, and we planned for the schedule in the coming days.

Teaching the Truth in Challenging Conditions

The next morning, I was taken to the new sports stadium in town, where 800 high school students awaited me to make my presentation, which vehemently defended

the historical and scientific accuracy of Genesis, the foundation book of our faith. In the tropical heat, I was left to set up the obsolete audio-visual system, pushed the projector around, as the screen was tattered. There were no tables, so I had to juggle the erratic microphone on one hand, and an iPad on the other, with sweat dripping down my face and arm. As challenging as it was, I managed to finish my 60-minute presentation in stifling heat, drenched head to toe. But to my surprise, a bunch of students came up at the end of the presentation, asked for the notes, thanked me for the many surprising truths told, and took happy Facebook snaps! I felt like a celebrity!



My short stint of fame came to an abrupt end as I was ushered quickly into the waiting minicab, to be taken up the hills of Pinaplata, the other major town on this island, for my second presentation in another school. A smaller school, with three adjoining classrooms that were opened up by folding timber walls, so that it formed one long room, for my presentation. The long room was low-roofed, with about 300 pupils cramped inside like sardines during the afternoon heat. I ordered the windows be flung opened immediately, and students to stand away from the entry doors, to help with any cross-wind ventilation. A small table was provided, but the audio-visual system and set-up were equally crude as the first.



Alas, all the fifteen teachers must have thought I was the visiting yaya (babysitter) for the day, and left me alone, abandoned, whilst they attended Pastor Joel's class in the next room. The students in the Philippines, whilst polite and respectful to teachers, walked in and out of the room, chatted and giggled with their buddies, making it very challenging.

A Wavering Heart! A Humbling Experience!

Returning back to my accommodation later that afternoon, I was despaired, and really considered whether I would do another mission trip. Backpacking this archipelago is way more fun. No more missions, no way!

The next day, I was summoned to lead the Youths Service at Faith Tabernacle Church, and both pastors asked me to talk about Hollywood, the media and video games, and how they can negatively corrupt young minds. It went much smoother with a much smaller crowd. But backpacking this archipelago is way more fun. No more missions, no way!

Ending my first leg, we flew a conventional propeller aircraft up north to Cagayan de Oro City, the 'Port of Gold' in the old Spanish, where I was to finish off two more school presentations. The first school was up on the back hills in a rural part of the city. To my pleasant surprise, they were so organised, making banners, certificates and a working audio-visual system with good projector screen. The school principal and teachers really made a spectacle to show their appreciation, even prepared a generous lunch, asked me to return and ensured that I send them the notes so that it could be displayed in the school bulletin board and library, for the students to study. Whoa! What a humbling experience!



Our Hope is in Christ

Later that afternoon, we went down the mountains to another school in town, that was carved out of a small mound of land, by gold prospectors of past. On the face of this carved mound were sedimentary layers, and I pointed out to the hundreds of students that it was likely evidence of Noah's Flood and the resultant catastrophe. They were all amazed as it made so much more sense than their fabled science textbooks teaching of slow formation, over millions of years.

The school principals all asked me to return to make more presentations. Although the evidence I provided contradicts popular textbook teaching, in their heart of hearts, they knew it to be true. We all concurred that the students need to hear both sides of the arguments, and think for themselves. The teachers asked, if I didn't present these truths, who would? After all, if I don't speak up, who will then avail to provide an answer to anyone who asks us about the very hope that we have in Christ?



Flying or FALLING?

**God alone is my rock, and my salvation, my fortress;
I shall not be shaken.**

"When God leads you to the edge of the cliff, trust Him fully and let go. Only one of two things will happen, either He'll catch you when you fall, or He'll teach you how to fly."

What comes to your mind when you read the above passage? I remember when I first read this, I was much younger in age, untried in life experience and green in my Christian faith. Audaciously, I exclaimed, "God, please teach me how to fly, please do not let me fall." Soon afterwards, I shared this passage with a friend, a much more humble and faithful person than I was. To my surprise, she uttered as a matter of fact, "Wow, it will be so good to be caught by God!" Really? But I was afraid of falling!

For many years, I was aspired and devoted myself to learn to "fly", not realising that my aspiration was undergirded by the dread to submit to God, rather than by the desire to soar with Him. I strived to fly, flapping my fledgling wings, but only managed to flutter and flounder like a foolish fowl. Don't get me wrong, life was not bad. In fact, it was good, so good that unconsciously, I allowed the Holy Spirit to be smothered by my own independent spirit.

**Even youths shall faint and be weary,
and young men shall fall exhausted.
(Isaiah 40:30)**

When God led me to the edge of a cliff, I had no choice but to let go. Letting go

is a humbling experience, it requires a humbled heart. In one of my favourite books "One Thousand Gifts", Ann Voskamp wrote: "the secret of joy's flame: Humbly let go. Let go of trying to do, let go of trying to control ... let go of my own way, let go of my own fears."

Only until I learnt to let go, despite knowing the possibility of falling, I would never have known how to trust God, to experience His faithfulness and the overwhelming joy of being caught by Him. I would never have understood what it meant by truly flying with God.

But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)

What areas in your life do you need to let go of to experience God's faithfulness? Rest assured that He has your best interest at heart. He will carry you in His bosom (Isaiah 40:11). Once you experience that, you will understand the psalmist, "**Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil**" (Psalms 23:4).

**The Lord upholds all who are falling
and raises up all who are bowed down.
(Psalms 145:14)**

**The Lord directs the steps of the
godly. He delights in every detail of
their lives. Though they stumble, they
will never fall, for the Lord holds them
by the hand. (Psalms 37:23-24, NLT)**

Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus

Author: Nabeel Qureshi

Reviewed by L.C.

Wow, where should I start? This is a mind-blowing book which guarantees to take the readers on a fascinating journey, of a truthful testimony of the conversion of a devout Muslim to Christianity. It also succinctly describes the steps the author underwent in discovering the essential truths of Christianity.

In the author's own words, he wrote this book with three purposes in mind: 1) "to tear down walls by giving non-Muslim readers an insider's perspective into Muslim's heart and mind"; 2) "to equip the reader with facts and knowledge, showing the strength of the case for the gospel contrasted with the case for Islam"; 3) "to portray the immense inner struggle of Muslims grappling with the gospel, including sacrifices and doubts".

Understanding the perspective of Muslims

This book had indeed given me a tremendous insight into the hearts and minds of the Muslims – the Islamic teachings and beliefs planted into them since young – "there are simply too many barriers for Muslim immigrants to understand Christians and the West.....only the exceptional blend of love, humility, hospitality, and persistence can overcome these barriers, and not enough people make the effort". In Nabeel's case, he encountered many Christians who did not care about him unless he became a Christian, until he met David (an atheist turned Christian) in college, where his quest for Christian truths started.

The case for the Christian gospel

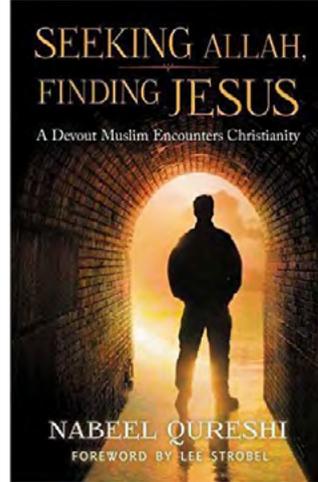
"When it comes to a basic knowledge of Christianity, it is important for people to be able to articulately explain what they believe and why. That, at least, is what 1 Peter 3:15 tells Christians to do." However, Nabeel encountered many Christians who

could not satisfy him with logical answers of their beliefs. In his mind, if it is proven that 1) Jesus did die; 2) Jesus did resurrect from death; 3) Jesus did claim to be God; then Christian doctrine is the truth. During his quest for these truths, he found the evidence so strong that he couldn't continue his life in deception. As he attempted to justify his upbringing, he discovered more falsehood about the Islamic teachings, the misled accuracy of the Quran, and the dubious life of their prophet Muhammad.

The inner struggle of Muslims

Nabeel's inner turmoil escalated to a climax, when he was unable to resolve the conflict between the truth of Christianity and the cost of turning away from the Islamic faith - the faith which bonded him with his family. During this time of mourning, he found comfort in the Bible. Most amazingly, Nabeel testified the role of the Holy Spirit in his conversion - the many signs and wonders revealed to him by God personally.

This is truly an eye-opening book, which guarantees to fascinate everyone who values truth!



Reach Recipe

Lemon Slice

By Emily Ooi



Ingredients

130g Butter
½ cup Sweetened condensed milk
200g Arrowroot biscuit (crushed)
½ cup Desiccated coconut
1 tsp Grated lemon rind

Lemon icing

1 ¾ cups Icing sugar (sifted)
40ml Lemon juice (approx. 2½ tbsp)
15g Butter

Methods:

1. Melt butter and condensed milk over low heat until well combined. Make sure not to burn the bottom.
2. Combine biscuit crumbs with desiccated coconut and lemon rind. Add milk mixture and mix well.
3. Press the mixture firmly into a lined 18x28cm tin. Refrigerate till firm.
4. Meanwhile, combine all lemon icing ingredients.
5. Spread icing over lemon slice base. Refrigerate till firm.
6. Cut into bite size and serve.

Fill in the blank for the following bible verses. These words form the clues for the Word Search, which can be found in the grid: across, down, and diagonally, including backwards. Letters may be used more than once.

1. From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “ _____, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:17)
2. And he said to them, “ _____ me, and I will make you _____ of men.” (Matthew 4:19)
3. “ _____ are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. _____ and be glad, for your _____ is great in _____, for so they persecuted the _____ who were before you.” (Matthew 5:11-12)
4. “You are the _____ of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light _____ before others, so that they may see your _____ works and give _____ to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)
5. “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to _____ them.” (Matthew 5:17)

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | K | D | S | B | L | S | G | P | U | Z | J |
| H | B | F | K | R | L | T | R | M | N | W | L |
| D | O | X | Y | I | E | E | L | V | U | S | I |
| D | I | K | F | O | J | H | S | J | T | Y | O |
| F | O | L | L | O | W | P | S | S | L | Q | A |
| P | U | O | I | D | C | O | M | I | E | N | D |
| F | K | C | G | L | O | R | Y | N | F | D | L |
| S | E | P | T | N | E | P | E | R | P | M | B |
| T | G | Q | O | J | F | V | N | W | E | O | L |
| S | R | U | I | B | A | A | I | T | A | N | V |
| P | L | K | A | E | B | C | H | G | H | R | R |
| L | I | G | H | T | U | V | S | X | Y | T | D |

Answers: 1. Repent 2. Follow, fishers 3. Blessed, Rejoice, reward, heaven, prophets 4. light, shine, good, glory 5. fulfill

Do you ave any pressing
life concerns or puzzling
life questions?

Write to us at:
reachforum@reachcc.org
and we will try to address
and answer them.

Picture Cover By: Samuel Tay

reach

Reach Community Church
2/177 Beavers Road
Northcote VIC 3070

Tel: (03) 9481 6889
Email: info@reachcc.org
www.reachcc.org

