

The background of the entire page is a detailed, aged map. It features a compass rose in the upper right corner, with a compass needle pointing towards the top right. The map is filled with various geographical labels, including "NORTH", "MAR DEL", "AMERICA", and "AFRICA". The map is drawn in a style that suggests it is from the 17th or 18th century, with intricate lines and shading.

# 2017

Looking Back  
and  
Looking Ahead

San Jose New Hope Church Testimonies, Vol. 3



“My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all the day, for their number is past my knowledge. With the mighty deeds of the Lord God I will come; I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone. O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.”

Psalm 71:15-18



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# True Joy



*Allen Kim*

My journey with Christ started in June of 2015 when I started dating Esther who is now my wife. I met Esther through a dating app called Coffee Meets Bagel and on my dating profile, I labeled myself as “spiritual, but not religious.” As a devoted Christian, this apparently troubled Esther a lot and almost convinced herself to pass me from ever meeting (Praise Jesus!). Early on in our relationship, Esther expressed her Christian values with me and asked if I would attend church with her. I remember telling her “Esther, I can’t promise you that I would ever become a Christian. I come from a non religious family who values philosophy - the study of fundamental nature of knowledge and reality through science and evidence. But one thing I’ll promise you is that as long as we are dating together, I am willing to attend church with you every Sunday.”

Although I had my fair share of skepticism as to how much I would actually believe in Jesus, I was very open and willing to at least learn about the Gospel. Because prior to meeting Esther, one of the central themes I set out to actively answer in year 2015 was “who I am” and “what’s my purpose in life”. Naturally when Esther asked me if I believed in God, I didn’t

know enough to argue for or against the existence of God. Therefore attending church to learn more about the Gospel was a great opportunity for me to further define my identity.

The events that followed shortly afterwards were nothing short of God personally reaching out to me to reveal Himself. When I moved from Santa Barbara to Silicon Valley? South Bay due to a job change, I got to meet Tiffany and Walter through Esther's sister's help. Their genuine kind-heartedness and care really showed in our first encounter and I was really touched by them. They invited me to come check out New Hope church and I decided to go to church without Esther for the first time.

The first Sunday sermon I (heard) attended was by pastor Yung discussing the importance of Gospel life cycle. That Christians should hear the Word, process the Word, live out the Word, and celebrate and report about the Word. At the end of the sermon, pastor Yung invited everyone to join a GLF group to act on this word and I decided to take up on his invitation and join a GLF group that very first Sunday attending church for the first time on my own.

By the second week of attending New Hope, pastor SooSang preached about the Christian identity. He shared that a person cannot be defined by others such as your parents and society nor can it be defined by your ownself. There are too many variables in this world that can shatter the very foundation of the identity that you defined and built over a lifetime in a matter of seconds. He later preached that the only identity that cannot be broken by any external or internal factors is by being defined as sons and daughters of God.

By a month into attending New Hope on my own, pastor SooSang organized a Seeker seminar series where non-believers and new believers can congregare at his house and discuss the Bible in depth for 6 weeks. This was an incredible opportunity for me because I was so focused on understanding the truth and I felt I needed more of God in addition to Sunday



service, weekly GLF groups. Seeker seminar was a platform for me to speak with SooSang for nearly 3 hours at a time for 6 weeks to discuss anything and everything about the Bible. It was one of the most exhilarating experience to know God and what it means to be a real Christian.

In April, I visited Esther in Santa Barbara and attended Easter Sunday service and had a chance to hear Nick Vujicic speak about true joy. To hear a man without any arms and legs on stage open up about his suicidal depression and not only was he able to overcome it but experience the truest joy in his life by giving himself all to God left me speechless.

It was that Easter Sunday that I decided I will become a believer of Christ. What started out as a seed of faith that Esther helped me plant in the summer of 2015, I kept tending to it through Sunday service, weekly GLF groups, seeker seminar, and bible studies that made me feel comfortable to make that leap of faith and declare myself as a Christian and follower of Jesus Christ. When my heart was closed off to accept Jesus, Esther worked through me to slowly open up and thirst for seeking the truth. That thirst grew ever more by meeting Tiffany and Walter on a January afternoon and attend church on my own for the first time. God then asked that I join a body of church through GLF and learn what it means to build a relationship with Him. God then challenged me with my preconceived notion that I can define my own identity through my earthly relationships and my career. And lastly, God saw that deep down, I wasn't experiencing the truest sense of joy through material and career successes. Pastor Nick shattered my view that even without any limbs in his body forced to depend on others everyday to survive, he couldn't be happier now that he's with God. So that's how I officially declared to be a Christian and was born again. But it wasn't until my wedding a few months later and our honeymoon that I felt compelled to be baptized as a response to Christ's saving grace. Esther and I went to Tahiti for our honeymoon. It was incredible to experience God's creation and beauty in the island of



Tahiti. While it was so wonderful to spend time with Esther and experience what the island had to offer, there was also a sense of tenderness and sweetness that I experienced with God during my honeymoon. It became particularly more apparent when God would answer our prayers each day we went out to experience Tahiti. On a pouring rainy day, we would pray God to help us experience his beauty through our excursions and by the time we started our excursion, a rainy day quickly turned to sunny skies. God allowed us to see two 30 foot humpback whales just 10 feet away from us with just our snorkeling gears in open ocean water.

As much as the honeymoon was to renew and remind the love I had for Esther and cherish these memories, it was also a honeymoon I had with God to cherish his love and tenderness forever.

Looking back, 2017 has been an absolute delight and surprise in every possible way. Once living the life as a non believer, I never imagined I would be publicly declaring my faith to Christ. I was born a sinner and through God's grace, I hope to live a Gospel driven life and build a house where Esther and I will put God first. I am eager to learn more of Him and build a relationship that will last forever.

# Workplace as a Mission



*Damon Moon*

I remember that on my first mission trip, it was really difficult to get back to work. The gap between missions trip and the workplace felt so big. After several years of being on the mission team and serving at Bishop, God started to show me how the workplace can actually be a mission field.

The beginning was quite similar. Most people who love missions now, may have made their first mission trip reluctantly. That was the case for me too. Maybe it's God's way of saying, "I am sending you.", and making it clear that it was God's plan and not my plan.

One of the things I noticed was that there are many believers on my work team. I feel fortunate and thankful to be on a team with brothers and sisters in Christ. Not only we have alignment on worldview, we encourage one another as brothers and sisters, and periodically pray together. At one point there were two part-time pastors in the company, and one of them was a young Mongolian pastor whom we met during Bishop training.

Another thing I noticed was that the role that I am in resem-

bles the structure of our church. While language and cultural differences could create tensions and conflicts, I was fortunate to experience unity in Christ through missions. This led me to imagine how companies can become more missional by serving the needs of others, and identifying what they are good at. Of course the ultimate goal, “why”, of the missions may differ, but there’s so many things I can learned on “how” people from different cultures can work together.

Earlier this year, one of my colleagues was struggling with work-related issues. I had a chance to listen to his situation, but there was nothing that I could do for him other than praying. So, on one of the benches on our campus, I prayed for him and his family and asked God to provide comfort. Weeks later, his work related issues were miraculously resolved. There may be more steps until he receives the gospel, but building lasting relationships, listening to his needs, and praying for him felt like a true extension of doing the wonderful things for the people of Bishop to being a blessing for my fellow residents here in Silicon Valley.

This was when I realized that the workplace can be a mission field. The crazy part is that I can do all of this without going to a remote place.

There’s a lot of hurting in families, but there’s also a lot of hurting in the workplace too. Like me, everybody is seeking security, forgiveness, justice, and love, the characteristics that only God can give.

In 2018, I want to become closer with God by loving the people that God gave me at the workplace through prayers and conversations in my daily life.

# The Love of a Father



*Sunny Duan*

I joined San Jose New Hope Church a little more than a year ago and it has been an incredible time of experiencing the sovereignty of God. I heard about the church from one of the associate pastors at my church in school, but when I first walked into the church through the front doors, I immediately felt out of place. Since I am Chinese, I saw all of the Korean characters everywhere and I was very confused as to what I had gotten myself into. When I found the English Ministry service, I still felt pretty out of place, but after the service, I did notice that there did seem to be a lot of people that wanted to talk to me. By the time I left, I was trying to inch my way out the door. When I left, one thing did stick out to me: I got to speak to Andy and Sally, and they explained how they had appreciated the balance of San Jose New Hope in how it was strong not only in the word, but also in emphasizing grace and community. As I continued to grow in this church, these were things that I learned to really admire and cherish as well.

My final decision to consider this church came after receiving the grace and healing through the sermons and the word. At the time, I struggled a lot with judging myself and the

sermon series on sonship and accepting the grace of God in Christ, was a profound healing for me. I felt like I had a lot of solid foundations in understanding reformed theology and I had gained a lot of practical church skills, and I knew that God loved me, but I still had a lot of fear and doubt. I felt that I had to be perfect in order for God to love me. As we went through the series, I began to see that God does not love me because of what I do, or how well I am able to follow His law, but He loves me as a Father does and I began to learn how to show grace to myself as I received grace. I continued to grow at SJNH as I found family and community here in GLF and through all the other interactions I had here.

Even though I felt like God had been moving in big ways during my time as SJNH, it wasn't until the summer retreat where I saw how God could use me in the church. Even after having attended the church for almost a year, I still sometimes felt out of place. I felt out of place because of my culture and my age. Part of me longed for the community I had in college, where I had so many like-minded friends. But through the retreat, I was able to receive wisdom from speaker at the retreat, Pastor Min. He opened my eyes to how there is value in being different and that I had the same shared vision and desire as the rest of the church to glorify God. In fact, the places where I was different and alien might even be a way that God could use me in the church. In that moment, I believe that God confirmed that I was where I should be, and though I was uncomfortable at times, He has a plan for me however big or small.

Throughout this year, I have experienced again and again the great mercy and prescience of God to bring me to SJNH. I have received so much from the community and I can tell that God is moving in the church. As I look forward to the future, I am excited, anticipating the great works God has for the year to come.

# Meaningful Purpose

*Jiwon Kang*

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*

*1 Peter 2:9*

Growing up, three things dominated my mind: video games, cool projects, and school. 60% of the time, I was thinking about the game I happened to be infatuated with. 30% of the time, I worked out concepts for projects that had to do with some kind of technology or video games. 10% of the time was dedicated to schoolwork, and even then, it was just me trying to make sure my grades were good enough so that my parents would let me play video games in peace.

My obsession with video games consumed all aspects of my life. I spent hours on video games. I was content to switch my brain off for hours and enjoy mindless, senseless entertainment that gave me great satisfaction in the moment. After I stopped playing for the day, I always felt drained, and I could barely function for the next few hours. I told myself it was ok.

At some point, the fatigue changed to something else. Instead of feeling tired, I began feeling empty and hollow when I stopped playing. In the end, I realized that it was more than fatigue, but an emptiness that I could not quite put my finger on. I ended up feeling confused and lost, and I wondered why I felt empty from doing what I loved.

In the winter of 10th grade, I went to the Youth Group retreat. I believe the theme for that trip was living "The Good Life."

Entering the retreat, I had absolutely no idea about what such a life entailed.

The first day, I listened to what other people shared during small groups. I found that individuals I listened to did not live their lives solely for their own desires, instead putting their faith in Jesus and living for Him alone. In contrast, I always trusted in myself to make my life great, and I believed that I did not need anything more in my life than that which gave me the most happiness, video games being the most important. My feeling of spiritual emptiness persisted, and after hearing about how others viewed life, I understood one thing: I was mistaken in my beliefs about what a good life is. Essentially, my entire worldview shattered after the first day.

On the last night of the retreat, which I knew as “the night where everyone cries together and feels God’s presence,” I sat and contemplated about what I believed in. I believed in my own ability to succeed, and I only followed my own desires. In my contemplation, I came to accept two things: my values are baseless and worthless, and the full lives that people in the retreat lived could only be attributed to God’s work. At that point, I came to understand that Jesus is real, that He loves and cares for us, and that even as we live sinful lives, the Holy Spirit gives us faith in Him so that we may follow Him. Yet, I couldn’t embrace His love, I wasn’t prepared to fully put my trust in Him. That night, I prayed for Him to show me some sign of His presence that I may come to believe.

Then this past summer, I went to our church’s summer mission trip to Bishop. In prior years, I’d seen it as just a thing that we went to, to do good things for the Native American community. At first, I was adamant in my refusal to go. For a while, my mother kept asking me if I wanted to go, and I constantly refused. I didn’t want to go because I always saw myself as a tiny gear in some great machine we call the mission team, and I saw myself as a useless individual. However, a few days before the trip, I suddenly felt like I



needed to go, so I ended up packing my bags for the trip, and thinking about it, I believe it was the Holy Spirit's doing. Being there, I felt like the things I was doing, like leading kids in the VBS, were inconsequential and served no real purpose. I still wondered why God brought me there. I thought about how my teammates would spend all of their time outside of VBS hanging out with the Native Americans, while I sat alone and either observed the people having fun with one another or sketching things in my notebook.

For a few more days, I felt that way, thinking "I have no purpose here," but at some point, that feeling was replaced. I participated in an event, I do not recall what, but afterwards, I felt differently about being in Bishop. I did not feel like my efforts had some major impact, instead, I felt that what I did was significant in a different sense, that it was something that I was called there to do. God sent me to be in Bishop, to participate in the body of Christ, as parts, all working together with the express purpose of sharing the Gospel through our lives. I understood on a personal level that Jesus loves me, cares for me, and has a purpose for me, even though I was flawed and broken. I couldn't really grasp that idea until He showed me through that trip.

Most of my life up to that point had been about myself, and I never realized that I was playing videogames, doing whatever with no underlying purpose or goal other than to make myself happy. Through what God has shown me, I now have a purpose to live for Him.

# From Abstract to Real



*Hannah Shin*

My faith as a Christian was solidified almost ironically. I came to believe in eternal life when I was thinking about the concept of death. I was overwhelmed with the agnostic view that saw death as the end of everything. I struggled with horror. I tried to understand that when I died, I would not have a conscience. No perception, no cognition. I simply wouldn't exist. And when my family and friends would inevitably die and their consciences would die with them, I wouldn't even exist in the memories of others. I probably gasped aloud. What a horrible thought.

All of this living building relationships, volunteering to help, saving lives, enjoying the excitement of surprises, savoring gleeful smiles, jumping at the moments of shock, being scared, healing, thinking, loving would be pointless, meaningless, and worthless. The things we do in life doesn't matter if it'll be forgotten in two, three, ten, twenty years after we die. Whether we were good or bad, loving or hateful, saints or criminals, none of it would matter after our hearts failed and brains stopped.

I appreciated then the fact that I was God's child. I under-

stood the meaning of the phrase so frequently preached and repeated by church people, “Jesus conquered death.”

I thought death was the end of everything. I realize now that death is just another milestone for Christians. The end of a material life, and the start of a heavenly one.

This understanding, this Christian view of death, is what really began my faith. The abstract words of “life everlasting” and “life eternal” and “life beyond death” took real, solid meaning in my heart. This is why Jesus Christ is so important. This is why God is so powerful.

I still struggle sometimes, especially living in the generation where worldly matters are emphasized more than ever and religion is seen as the blockade for advancement. But now, I take strength that my faith in God is all that’s necessary. That I have been and will be taken care of by God, and all I have to do is follow. And that life everlasting is really real.

# His Unending Love

*Benjamin Amores*

My command is this: Love each other as I  
have loved you. Greater love has no one than  
this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

John 15:12-13

Ever since I was little, I've been going to church with my family. I always knew God existed, but didn't really think of him as a big part of my life. Occasionally, I would ask him to help me during tests, but I never had a deep relationship with him. I only looked forward to going to church every Sunday so I could hang out with my friends and watch them play video games. However, since then, Jesus has helped me realize how much I need him. I think this was because of my relationship with my family.

My family's relationship wasn't very good. We would always yell at each other about everything. Small disagreements would turn into big arguments, and we would yell until we lost our voices. I especially felt resentment towards my older brother for bossing me around. "Get me water!" "Give me the remote control!" "Do it or you're not allowed to play video games!" He would command me and boss me around. I felt I had no power and I thought I had the worst brother in the world, and I started to question why I had the family that I did. During middle school, I felt more and more bitter towards my family, and started to think God didn't care for me. However, something changed during my freshman year of high school.

I realized a lot of the bitterness I felt was due to my own selfishness. I thought about all the stuff that I had done wrong,

and how I wasn't a better son/brother, and that I had taken all the things my family had done for me for granted. I felt ashamed of the stuff I had done, and thought I wasn't a good enough person to deserve the luxuries that I had. I started to push people away because I felt like I didn't deserve to have good people in my life. When people tried to get close to me, I thought it was because they pitied me. It wasn't until the Bishop mission trip last year that I was reminded of a very important thing. That even though I am ashamed, I can stand tall because Jesus has forgiven me and has covered me with mercy.

I am glad that Jesus is a part of my life. Since then, my relationship with my family, especially my brother, has gotten a lot better. Even though there may be times where I have no one to talk to, I know I can rely on Jesus, and that because of him, I am unashamed.

# Escaping My Own Prison

## *Jenny Hong*

*“He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim freedom for the captives  
and release from darkness for the prisoners”  
Isaiah 61:1*

I watched a documentary called Blackfish late last year. It was about cruelty to orca whales in captivity, and their imprisoned plight really haunted me. After learning about these poor creatures, I began to experience physical signs of what I was feeling for them emotionally. Short of breath, lack of sleep, and exhaustion. My husband urged me to go to the hospital, but I didn't even know how to explain where I was hurting. Then, I called my Pastor.

Ironic enough, we were going through the sermon series of self identification. I found myself very disengaged on this topic. I wasn't sure if I had so many idols that I couldn't narrow it down to just one. Or, if I even understood my relationship with God well enough to identify what I was really struggling with.

Out of desperation, I emailed Pastor Yung and Christy and asked them to meet with me. As they came into my home, they said a quick silent prayer. Pastor Yung wrote a few things down on a piece of paper and flipped it over. This act seemed so insignificant at the time, but it later was a defining moment. I didn't even have time to ask about how their day was or what they had been up to. I looked straight at both of them and asked “What is wrong with me”?

Loaded question, I know. I began to explain some of the things I was suffering from and within minutes of sharing, Pastor Yung turned the paper over and it read, “Comfort” and “Protection”. And there you have it. The very idols that I was in search of were written out on a piece of paper before I even said a word.

When I contacted Pastor Yung out of the blue, he began to pray over our meeting. God must’ve given him a hint and kept repeating those words to him. Without knowing anything at all, we all sat together with God that day in my living room. He knew that if the consultation program were announced a second sooner, I would have never signed up. So, He put the ball in my court and gave me just enough to call out. Knowing my own selfish and prideful ways, He led me to Him in exactly the way I needed to so He could meet me again.

In the months to come, my husband Jeff had an epiphany while being an innocent bystander to my transformation. As I was trying to find a way to quit my day job and dedicate my life to free the whales from Seaworld, he said something to me that changed my life. The very animal that I pledged to stand up for was the very reflection of myself. He gently said to me, “You are the whale”.

What does this mean?

As he began to explain, it was mind blowing to connect to this cause of freedom that I was fighting for myself all along. Metaphorically, I was the whale that was trapped in a concrete tank, alone. I forced myself into what I thought was comfort because in that lonely place, at least I was still protected.

From then on, no matter what I am called to do, even if I don’t feel an ounce of love for the person or action, I have learned to obey. I am not even close to perfecting the things God wants to do with me. But my ears are perked and my heart is open for



the things that I know I can handle, because He made me able. God loves me in a way that tests my patience, but also gives me so much freedom in knowing I am safe.

5 hours of what was later called a consultation is the gift that keeps on giving. The feelings I felt, the things I learned and the conversations I have had with people new and old, are truly unforgettable and the most meaningful of hours that I can count to this day. Being God's daughter uniquely qualifies me in saying that He is my ultimate protector and comforter. Brick by brick I am chipping away at a wall that looks and feels so familiar. But, this is just the beginning of my journey.

# Learning New Things About an Old Friend

*Jeff Hong*

*Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?*

*Matthew 6:26*

My wife always jokes that I'm slow and I take too long...with everything. I'd like to think of myself as being analytical, detail oriented, and someone who thinks things through. Ironically, when it comes to my relationship with God, I expect and want everything to be fast.

As far back as I can remember, I would logically justify and convince myself why God didn't love and care for me as much as others and that would result in having little to no trust in God. I was completely and utterly indifferent towards God and blamed Him for everything that went wrong or didn't happen. I was so disconnected with what it meant to abound in God's love and trust, that I didn't even realize this was the source of my broken relationship with God.

This was something I realized during my counseling with Pastor Yung and his wife, Christy. Unlike my wife's counseling session where there were immediate blessings for her, my consultation was much slower. There were many awkward moments of silence and a lot of deep thoughtful pauses from Pastor Yung. Towards the end of my consultation, Pastor Yung recited a verse from Mark 9:24

Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I be-

lieve; help my unbelief!”

This verse would later become one of the most important verses during my walk with God this year.

God’s faithfulness and steadfast love was shown to me through a series of events. Several weeks after my consultation, Pastor Yung, Christy, my wife, and I were invited to dinner over at a fellow church members’ place, Brian and Sandra. I walked away from that dinner inspired.. Sandra’s strength and faith was a testament to God’s faithfulness. As she was sharing, Pastor Yung said something that literally pierced my heart. He said, “Sandra, as Jesus was on that cross, he thought of you. He thought of each and every one of us as He hung on that cross.” The image of Jesus hanging on that cross thinking about me, instead of the pain and hurt He must’ve felt was gut wrenching, but at the same time, it felt so personal.

As part of my consultation, Pastor Yung recommended I read Exodus. My initial thought was “Exodus? Really? I know the story of Moses and how he led the Israelites out of Egypt. What’s there to learn?” Without expecting much, I committed myself to finishing Exodus. After the story of Moses and the Israelites crossing the Red Sea, I began losing interest. The rest of Exodus was about commandments, laws, and telling the Israelites to build this and build that. Then it dawned on me...Exodus 26:1-6.

“Moreover, you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet yarns; you shall make them with cherubim skillfully worked into them. The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the breadth of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains shall be the same size. Five curtains shall be coupled to one another, and the other five curtains shall be coupled to one another. And you shall make loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in the first set. Likewise you shall make loops on the

edge of the on the edge of the outermost curtain in the second set. Fifty loops you shall make on the one curtain, and fifty loops you shall make on the edge of the curtain that is in the second set; the loops shall be opposite one another. And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains one to the other with the clasps, so that the tabernacle may be a single whole.”

These verses spoke to me in ways that would completely alter my view of God. The God we worship and praise, is a detailed God. He gave highly specific instructions to the Israelites on how to build this tabernacle. The number of curtains, the type of linen, color, length, placement, etc. How much more detailed can you get? When I think about the people I can trust, being detailed is a characteristic I look for. In Exodus I saw how extraordinarily detailed God is. How could I not trust the most detailed being in the universe?

I became obsessed with finding out more about who this God is. So I decided to re-read Exodus and as I was reading through the first few chapters, I realized how dependable God is even when I have doubts and uncertainties. Exodus 6: 28-30 - Exodus 7:1-2

On the day when the Lord spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, the Lord said to Moses, “I am the Lord; tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you.” But Moses said to the Lord, “Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips. How will pharaoh listen to me?”

And the Lord said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of his land.

Being reliable and dependable are characteristics that are high up on my list when I think of a person who is trust-

worthy. God used Aaron to help Moses in his time of need. As I continued on my journey to find out who God is to me, I began reading the book of Matthew with a few brothers at church. I literally felt every verse I read was a promise God made to me. Take Matthew 6:26 for example.

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

I've heard this verse multiple times throughout my life and I always related it to God being a provider. This time around, it sounded different. I heard it as a promise. Yet again, another characteristic I look for in a person who I can trust; a person who keeps their promises.

Each and every day my trust in God grew more and more, even when things around me seemed to be falling apart. Time and time again, God showed me that everything was part of His plan and all I needed to do was trust Him. When doubts would creep in, God would give me confirmation. These confirmations came in all different forms; prayer, scripture, my wife, my GLF (GospeLife Family), a conversation with a brother or sister, discipleship, and others.

I knew God was changing my heart and revealing more of Himself to me. He wanted a deeper relationship with me; a Father and son relationship. But in order for me to understand my Father, I need to learn to be a son. I ask God just that, to help me submit to Him and to be a faithful son.

I now understand, in order to have a deeper relationship with God, and experience the infinite blessings that God has in store for me, I have to respond in all that I do with faith in my trustworthy, detailed Father, even when it doesn't always make sense to me. This includes the many, what Pastor Soosang would like to refer to as, "God-sized" problems I have.

However, just like in Exodus, I know God will provide a way for me when He calls me to face these “God-sized” problems. When I am afraid, worried, and/or anxious, I pray and meditate on the verse from the book of Mark and ask God to help my unbelief. To me, that verse from the book of Mark encompasses all that I struggled with; love and trust.

You see, I like processes and systems in place. Accomplishing and perfecting one thing then moving onto the next. The only way for God to get through to me was to come down to my level and patiently show me step by step, how He loves me and why I should put all my faith and trust in Him.

To a certain extent, I guess my wife is right. I guess I am slow. Being “slow” isn’t so bad when it’s me. God was loving me in a way where I could understand and in a way where it fits my personality. He is a personal God, and how much more personal can it be when your Father loves you the way you need to be loved?

# Seeing God For the First Time Again



*John Har*

I think it was fall of 2016 when I was convicted to read the Bible again. We had a prayer meeting at our house with a visiting pastor, and seeing how everyone there struggled to recall Bible verses, he challenged us to know God's Word inside and out. The last time I had read the entire Bible was in college - and even then, I don't recall if I got past the minor prophets of the Old Testament. It definitely had been too long.

As 2017 approached during Christmas break, I decided to read the Bible through in one year. I picked one of the reading plans in the YouVersion Bible app that went through the bible chronologically. I was hoping that by reading it chronologically rather than book order, the Bible would make more sense. Also, instead of reading the Bible like a history book (reading for facts) or as an in-depth Bible study like I did in college, I would read the Bible to meet God - that I would look for what the Bible revealed to me about God's character, God's purposes, and God's love.

What a difference that made. I got to see how much God loved his people, even in the midst of sin and brokenness. I



got to see God's constant heart of justice and mercy - such as in the mercy seat on the Ark. I got to see his perfection and care for every detail in the exact designs for the temple and priestly practices. I finally understood how to delight in God's laws which portray a grace-filled society, a city of God, even with sin and poverty around us.

I'm so glad that I read through the Bible this year. I actually hope to do it again, because there is so much I feel like I still missed. It's like wanting to watch a great movie again to catch the depth and details you miss the first time through.



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