

capacity for self-delusion and denial. The self-righteous would never admit their self-illusionary and hollow uprightness. In all likelihood, His listeners would defiantly dismiss His denouncement as an abstract concept than an absolute description of them.

It actually requires great effort to maintain a self-respecting and God-fearing front. One might then reasonably ask, why would a person want to go through all the trouble to be self-righteous if it's so loathsome to God? It's not possible to list all the reasons as they can be as varied and opinionated as the individuals themselves. Each has their own motivations, sets of convictions and interpretations of how others ought to conduct themselves and express their own piety.

Believe it or not, self-righteous people can be genuinely sincere. Unfortunately, their religious paradigm doesn't allow them to see the truth. That's the cruellest irony of it all – in sincerely pursuing the truth, people can be blinded and mastered by their interpretation of the truth. They prefer to see things in rigid black and white categories because it frees them from any moral ambiguity and tells them exactly what's right and what's wrong. While this is useful to counter the fluidity and ambivalence of our culture's moral standards, it can cause one to build a "besieged" and "we versus them" stance against others. There's a very subtle and thin line between genuine righteousness and self-congratulating righteousness.

This is the point of Jesus' warning – "To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable..." (Luke 18:9). It's the comparative advantage factor involving the ego that is most nauseous to Jesus. When we use comparisons to define who we are, we miss out the purpose and meaning of our righteousness i.e. to express our gratitude to God and to acknowledge that our true righteousness comes from Christ.

Self-righteousness is one of the most devious forms of immorality, because the malevolent intent is masked by an illusory image of utmost goodness. When we are incognizant of our true position in Christ, we appoint ourselves in place of God, making God a servant and victim of our own spiritual purposes.

Jesus reserves His harshest words for the self-righteous because they're the enemy of genuine faith. Remember His series of "woes" in Matthew 23? He called them "hypocrites!" It might be enlightening to remember also who plotted to kill Him – not the populace but the outwardly blameless and the self-righteous! Reflect on this. It may lead you to reconsider your understanding of your own spiritual piety and practices.

Pastor Song Cheng Hock

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WELCOME all guests who have come to worship with us this morning. If this is your first visit, please fill in the Visitor Form so that we can keep in touch with you.



DO NOT FORGET TO SWITCH OFF YOUR HANDPHONES!

PREPARING FOR THE NEW YEAR

What do we have in store for the new year 2010?

After much prayer and waiting on the Lord, we have proposed to work on the theme: "Equip God's people for the ministry".

In January, our theme will be "**Equipped to Serve - Rediscovering our Purpose**". The weekly Sunday themes will be as follows:

Jan 3 - **Jesus our Model for Service**

Jan 10 - **Rediscovering our Purpose 1**

Jan 17 - **Rediscovering our Purpose 2**

Jan 24 - **The Preparation and the Right Attitude to Serve**

Jan 31 - **Open - Evangelistic Meeting**

We have also invited various teachers and lecturers to help train us to be equipped for the ministry.

ADULT CLASSES - 9.15AM-10.30AM.

We have invited Dr. Suraja Raman to do a seminar on "**The Gift of Teaching**" in 2010. The syllabus is as follows:

"**The Ministry of Teaching in Today's World**"

"**The Teaching Learning Dynamics**"

"**Creative Bible Teaching**"

"**Issues of a Christian Nature**"

"**Facing Challenges in the World.**"

These classes are open to all members, especially for those who wish to serve in the teaching ministry. Learn to teach the Word of God properly and creatively.

***Please register for these classes and commit yourselves to finishing them.*

ADDITIONAL ADMIN PERSON(Part time) NEEDED

In view of Pastor Song's leaving, we are looking for an additional part time admin person who will be willing to manage the church office from **Monday to Friday, 9.00am-1.00pm.**

Please note that this is a ministry, a service to the Lord. Duties will include helping to prepare the church newsletters, inviting and reminding speakers, filing, documentation and some secretarial duties. Please contact Brother Aaron or Uncle Neville if you feel led to serve or if you have someone to recommend.

REMINDER

The AV Station is only for authorised persons. Please do not enter the station if you are not authorised. Last week the system malfunctioned during worship.

Ps Sarah's son, Paul and his team from Vietnam will be in Singapore from 7-12 Jan. 2010 to conduct a **Worship Seminar** (look out for details in the next few weeks). Meantime, we need volunteers for transportation, befriender, logistics etc, during their 6 days here. Please see Aaron Ang (96164900) if you can serve. Col 3:23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men. Thank you.

PRAYER PAGE



1. **Please pray for Pastor Song**, as he brings us God's Word this morning. Pray that we will all be responsive to God's word and to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

2. Pray for the **Worship Team**, the **audio/visual support group**, as well as the **ushers**. Pray that God will continually refresh them as they experience deeper worship themselves, leading others to worship God in spirit and in truth.

3. **Please pray that as we worship this morning**, that the Lord will visit us and give us a fresh anointing, all to His glory. Pray too for more people to offer themselves to serve in the church.

We still need an assistant treasurer and also a **coordinator for the Adult Bible Class.**

4. **Uncle Neville is preaching at Hiding Place** this morning. Please pray for him. He will also be preaching at Bt Batok Presbyterian Church on Saturday, 19th December.

5. Thank you for praying for the **Youth and for their Camp last week**. We were told that most of those who attended enjoyed the experience. Continue to pray for Brother Wai Chan as he serves among the youths and also for his studies in SBC.

Pray also for Bro. Byju who has left for India to be with his wife.

6. Continue to uphold **sister Alice** in prayer. Pray for God's grace and strength to be with her and **sister Catherine**.

7. **Please pray for our programs and visions** for 2010 as we wait upon the Lord for His will and provision of a pastor. Pray that God will raise more people from our midst to be involved in the leadership of our church.

Memory Verse:

Last week's: Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. - **John 14 : 1**

This week: The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing. - **Psalms 34 : 10**