

our lives.

That unwillingness to acknowledge one's weakness is actually a symptom of self-loathing. People who don't love themselves enough are ashamed of facing the truth and change. If strength is all we try to communicate, we're living in treacherous denial. We're true and authentic only when we acknowledge our weakness and ask God to deal with it.

However, it doesn't always mean that He'll heal it. Paul pleaded with God three times to remove that thorn in his flesh. But contrary to Paul's expectations, the Lord didn't remove it. He had a greater purpose in retaining it. Some believe Paul prayed more than three times as He might be using the Hebrew figure of speech that means ceaselessly and continuously.

Of course, there is much debate over what that thorn was. Conjectures range from spiritual harassment to physical or mental ailment. Then there are those who think it might be persecution or Paul's struggle with lustful and sinful thoughts. Whatever it was, God didn't remove it. No amount of faith or pleading could cause God to remove that painful impediment.

Most would welcome the removal of any burden as the most favourable solution. But God sometimes provides the other unconventional option – instead of removing it, He retains it so that in our weakness, we can become strong.

To experience this grace, we must believe we're in need of it. We can't receive the sufficiency of God's grace until we acknowledge our own insufficiency. This calls for humility. Humility is the strength that doesn't deny our frailty and weakness.

Paul needed that thorn to keep him humble and reliant on God. Earlier in the text, he shared about his incredible vision of heaven. It would have been easy for him to become conceited and see himself in glorified terms, or gain the admiration of others. Thus the thorn!

But God's grace was more than sufficient. When we fail and fall into darkness, God doesn't withdraw His grace. It's always there for us. Jesus' death on the cross is proof of that. He died for our sins. We can acknowledge our weaknesses because we're loved. There's no fear in love. Grace could meet Paul's pain because it was the very strength of God.

The spiritual life can't be cultivated by denial and deceit of our true condition. We don't have to artificially manufacture a false identity to gain acceptance by others or by God. The more we live in an untruth, the more alienated we become. Stop living a lie. God's grace is more than sufficient for you. His strength works best in weakness.

Pastor Song Cheng Hock

DO NOT FORGET TO SWITCH OFF YOUR HANDPHONES!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

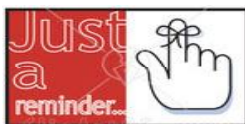
WE WELCOME all guests who have come to worship with us this morning. If this is your first visit, please fill in the Visitor Form so that we can keep in touch with you.

SUNDAY BIBLE SCHOOL

Two classes are conducted upstairs every Sunday morning from 9.15 - 10.00a.m. before Worship Services.

Basic Christian Living classes are for new believers or believers who wish to hone their Christian Living. **Facilitator:** Sister Chiew Eng.

Discipleship Class: For believers who wish to deepen their Christian Life. Studying the book of Philippians. **Facilitator:** Pastor Song.



OUR NEXT EVANGELISTIC MEETING:

November 29th 2009 at 10.30am.

PRAY, PREPARE PARTICIPATE. Pray without ceasing. Pray specifically for

someone to bring. Pray for salvation for friends and family. **Prepare** to see many come to know Christ. Be an usher, a counsellor or just a helper. **Participate** in our evangelistic effort. Share a testimony, a song item or contribute a dish for the lunch. Let's unite in our effort to win souls for our Lord. **Our evangelist will be Pastor Daniel Teh.**

For Those Facing Change

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Heb 13:8).

Pray for those who are facing change in their lives. Some are coming to terms with loneliness, others with problems of work or lack of employment, or ill-health.

Remember each by name and ask God to give them fresh reserves of strength and hope to meet the demanding challenges that life brings.

Be assured that our God understands "for we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have One who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Heb 4: 15-16).

THIS MORNING

Uncle Neville will be speaking on the Subject, **SPIRITUAL GROWTH (VII)**. He will be touching on issues of **the Holy Spirit and Servant Leadership**.

Casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you. 1 Peter 5:7

PRAYER PAGE



1. . Please pray for **Uncle Neville** as he brings God's Word to us this morning. Pray for ourselves too that we may not be hearers of the Word only but doers too.

3. Pastor Song will be leaving us at the end of this year. Please pray that God will provide for us a new person of His calling to lead our congregation. Pray for the Directors as they meet to decide on the new leadership of the church.

4. Brother **Yook Siong's mother** needs our prayer. She has advanced stage cancer and has been hospitalised. Please pray for the Lord's peace, calm assurance and divine healing over her.

5. We praise the Lord for His grace on **sister Alice**. Her blood test and doctor's review went well and she was able to go through her chemo last week. Do pray for strength and stamina for her and **sister Catherine** as she cares for her sister.

6. Pray for **students** who are studying for their final exams, that the Lord will guide, strengthen and bless them with success as they try their best. Pray too for parents of the students that they may trust the Lord and commit their children to Him.

7. Pray too for **Brothers Byju and Wai Chan** studying in E.A.S.T and the Singapore Bible College. They too are having their exams this month. Please pray for them as they study to be fit servants for our Lord.

8. Continue to pray for our **Youths** - for their devotion to God and steadfastness as they face daily challenges and temptations. Pray too for their leaders that they may be able to work together for the glory of God. Pray also for Brother Wai Chan as he mentors and trains the young leaders.

8. Thank you for praying for Sister Lay Ling in Seremban. She is coping quite well with her recent loss of her husband Boon Han. Pray for her as she adjust to life with Boon Han and as she raises her two teenaged children.

PASTORAL PRAYER. *Should you or someone you know need prayer, please speak to the pastor or send your email to chggod@churchofgodsg.com.*

Memory Verse:

Last week's: *Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. - 1 Thessalonians 5:11*

This week: *We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. - 2 Corinthians 5:20*