The Things We Must Learn

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From birth, one must continually learn—as the saying goes, “We are never too old to learn”. This is especially true for Christians.

From the time we accept Christ, we must continue to learn and mature in order to gradually become more like Him. In this way, we will prosper in our spiritual lives and be able to overcome all temptation, shining the light of Christ wherever we are. Therefore, we must resolve to trust in God and strive to learn to be like Christ.

What things do we need to learn in our pursuit to be Christ-like?

1. Learn the words of God

God said: “And it shall be, if they will learn carefully the ways of My people, to swear by My name, ‘As the LORD lives,’ as they taught My people to swear by Baal, then they shall be established in the midst of My people” (Jer 12:16).

“The ways of My people” refers to the commands God has given to His people, namely, His words. We know the word of God is spirit and life, for the Bible tells us: “Man shall not live on bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Mt 4:4). Therefore, “Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col 3:16). Only then can we always walk in God’s way and dwell in His love.

2. Learn to pray

Now it came to pass, as [Jesus] was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” So He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’”

Luke 11:1–4

We need to learn to pray with humility and thankfulness, for only then will we receive bountiful grace. Often, we pray amiss, so our prayers go unanswered. We choose to indulge ourselves and waste time on sinful pleasures instead. We must return to the Lord’s Prayer that Jesus taught us, which is full of thanksgiving, humility and hope in God’s kingdom and righteousness.

All that we have has been given by God, so we have nothing to boast about. We are limited in physical strength and ability, which is why we often find our prayers are inconsistent. Let us learn from Cornelius: because he prayed always, his prayers reached the presence of God and were remembered by Him (cf. Acts 10:4).

3. Learn to endure like Christ

Paul said: “Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ” (2 Thess 3:5). The Lord Jesus has left us many examples of His patience: when He was accused, He did not defend Himself; when He was beaten, He did not retaliate; instead, He prayed for those who persecuted Him. The first words Jesus said on the cross were: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Lk 23:34).

The Lord prepared His disciples by telling them: “And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved” (Mk 13:13). Moreover, James encourages us in this way: “Let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing” (Jas 1:4).

Since we have been elected to be stewards in the household of God, we are the servants of God. Therefore, we must diligently serve Him and the church, to fulfill the commission that our Lord has given us. We must be alert, keeping watch over ourselves and over the whole flock. To pastor the church of God, we must be patient and endure like Christ. If we can learn to do so, our lives will be rich and fulfilling, and pleasing to God, bringing glory to His name.

Weddings

October 7: Lawrence Wong (Philadelphia, USA) & Yvonne Tam (Newcastle) @ Newcastle TJC
Elgin

Between 24 September–31 October, we had visitors from all parts of the UK: Bro Ah Bat Leung and his wife from the south; Sis Yuk Ling Shek (Edinburgh); Bro Ng Yau Chan, Bro Teen Yau Shek, his wife, and Sis Pui Kay Leung (Gifford Park); Bro Jung Man Cheung and his family (Portsmouth); and Sis Ling Shek (Leicester).

From 2–14 November, Pr FF Chong came to pastor. He encouraged and reminded us to be careful and remain alert, so that we do not lose the blessings that God has prepared for us. In addition, Pr Chong led spiritual cultivation sessions for service leaders, adults’ Bible study, youth classes and prayer sessions.

In December, Eld YH Chiu and his wife (Taiwan) came to Elgin, and we took the chance to hold a two-day spiritual cultivation on “Jesus heals the paralytic”. There was a church board members and married couple discussion on the topic “Be a Helpful Worker for Jesus”, where we were encouraged to be united with the Lord Jesus, and united with our spouses. May God remember and bless Eld Chiu and his wife for their servitude, and may their journey be peaceful until the very end, when they return to the heavenly kingdom.

Also in December, Pr Joseph Shek and Dn Shek Lin Tou visited with their respective spouses. Additionally, we were visited by Bro Wei Yeen Wong and his family (Hong Kong), Bro Yung Hing To and his wife from the south, Bro Wing Fung Ng and his wife (USA), and Bro Teen Sung Leung (Edinburgh).

Their arrivals brought warmth and joy. May the Lord remember them for their love, and may they have a peaceful journey back home.

Sunderland

On 13 October, Eid FM Che from Taiwan was here to share encouragements and the words of God on the Sabbath.

Pr Steven Shek pastored us in October, and Pr Michael Chan in November. Both preachers encouraged us, respectively, and spent time with us in service, fellowships and Bible study.

On 16 October, we held a memorial service for our beloved Bro Kee On Ho, who was peacefully called back to the Lord.

We also held our annual spiritual convocation in October, with the theme “Follow in the Lord’s Footsteps”. Pr Steven Shek, Pr Johnny Liu and Eld YH Chiu (Taiwan) edified us through their teachings and exhortations. Thank God for guiding us throughout the three days, and for the efforts and love of the local members, who came together to serve the Lord with willingness and diligence.

On 25 December, we held our annual general meeting, in which we discussed many matters, though no proposals were raised.

On 30 December, both young and old gathered together for our end-of-year thanksgiving service, praising the Lord with beautiful hymns and worship. The RE classes split into two combined groups, the junior classes and the senior classes, and sang with zealous hearts. Harmony Choir, who uplifted our hearts with their beautiful and powerful version of “Cathedral of Praise”, gave a wonderful presentation. Various groups and fellowships also came out to sing, offering encouragements to us all to be strong in our faith and service to our Lord God.

Gifford Park

Thank God, we hosted the Truth Research Committee meeting and the Preachers’ Seminar from 19–25 November. It was a rare and blessed occasion where all the UK-based preachers, along with Eld YH Chiu (Taiwan), were gathered in one place, and we received many words of encouragement and edification.

We held our annual Winter Youth Fellowship on 24-25 December. More than twenty RE students and teachers attended and learnt about “Abraham: Friend of God”. We studied four aspects of Abraham’s life: his covenant with God, his obedience, faith and intercession. “And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God” (Jas 2:23).

Newcastle

The joyous holy matrimony of Bro Lawrence Q Wong (USA) and Sis Yvonne Tam took place on 7 October. Family, friends and brethren gathered to witness their blessed transatlantic union in the Lord. We say farewell, and ask the Lord to bless and guide their footsteps as they begin their new life in Philadelphia.

We also welcomed the IA workers on 10–11 October who attended the IA EXCO meeting. Eld YJ Lin (Taiwan) also encouraged the members on “Unity of the Church” from the Book of Ephesians.

November began with a visit from IA worker Eld YH Chiu and his wife (Taiwan), who testified of God’s grace during his trials as a full-time worker. On 4 November, Pr Michael Chan led an RE teachers’ seminar on the offerings recorded in Leviticus. We held a small hymnal evangelical on 25 November, where we introduced our friends to our “Beautiful, Wonderful Saviour” using hymns and testimonies. We thank the Lord for the six truth-seekers and the local members who attended.

Leicester

On 14 October, we had our New Building Induction Day where members were formally shown around and given a presentation about how to use the building. We held our spiritual convocation on 21–23 October, and were encouraged by Eld YH Chiu (Taiwan) and Pr TK Chin on the theme of “It is Good to be Here”. Thank God, two adults were baptised: Sis Rachelle de Mesa and Sis Yuk Ping Fung.

On 28 October, the church held its annual general meeting, during which the congregation received reports from the various departments. On 25 December, we made use of the day off from work to gather in church for a service and to hold cooking workshops for all the family: making sushi, handmade noodles, desserts and dumplings. The latter workshop was led by a friend from Beijing, her daughter, niece and a university student.

We are obviously delighted and thankful for moving into the new building, but we continue to pray that God will help us with the sale of the old building that remains on the market, a situation not helped by the challenging economic conditions. We ask that you help us pray for this matter.
Cambridge

On 8 December, a baby girl, Madison Rui En Shek, was born to Sis Wei and Bro Bob Shek. We thank the Lord for His blessing in bringing this baby safely into the world and ask for His continued care of the family.

We thank the Lord for recent visits from Bro Daniel, Sis Lisa and their daughter Emily Liew (Portsmouth), Eld YH Chiu and his wife (Taiwan), Bro Wing Hing and Sis Amy Chan (Leicester), Sis Hui Ting Hsu (Boston, USA), Sis Anessa Liew, Bro Kelvin Liew (France), Sis Lavinia Koh and her family (Singapore), and Bro Tariq, Sis Joe and their son Ethan Mahmood (Leeds), as well as Sis Joe’s family (Taiwan).

We bid farewell to Dns Yapp, who returned to Sandakan in Malaysia.

London

Our autumn spiritual convocation was held from 12-14 October. The themes for the convocation were “Add to Your Faith” and “Service to the Lord”. The convocation was led by Pr Joseph Shek, Pr TK Chin and Eld Joshua Phoong (Malaysia). During the convocation, we held two evangelical services, which were attended by numerous truth-seekers. Twelve people were baptised, and many members from Portsmouth, Manchester, Leicester and Sunderland joined us for the convocation.

We held our December special service from 24-26 December, with the theme: “I Was Glad When They Said to Me, ‘Let Us Go Into The House of the Lord.’” The services were led by Pr FF Chong, Pr TK Chin and Dn Enoch Chong. Praise the Lord, the event accommodated over 200 members, including our brethren from mainland China. In addition, around thirty truth-seekers attended the event, some of whom received the Holy Spirit during the prayer sessions.

Our annual general meeting was held on 8 December. During the meeting, it was decided that we will raise funds for the refurbishment of the first and second floors of the church building, to provide new RE classrooms and secondary halls for services and fellowship activities. We pray that God will guide us as we embark on this major project in the coming months.

Forest Hill

Our theme for October was “A God-centred Marriage”, where we had a lecture and a discussion in which everyone shared their views and personal experiences. Eld Joshua Phoong (Malaysia) and Pr Joseph Shek also visited and sermonised at Forest Hill on 13 October, when they were not sermonising at the church in London during the autumn spiritual convocation.

November’s theme was “Parent and Child Relationships”. Along with a discussion on this topic, Pr TK Chin spoke to us specifically on expectations for our children. Eld YH Chiu and his wife (Taiwan) arrived to give our young church a much-needed spiritual boost. They visited members and also led the Mothers’ Fellowship on 30 November.

On 2 December, Eld Chiu held a seminar for the church board on how to be God’s good helper, before exhorting the congregation on the miracle of the five loaves and two fish.

On 7 December, Bro Wayne and Sis Lian Lian Shi became proud parents of a healthy baby boy named Brian.

We held our first annual general meeting on 22 December, with departmental reports from the religious affairs, general affairs and financial affairs, and the outlining of plans and budgets for the next year. After the meeting, we concluded the day with an RE teachers’ seminar, led by Pr TK Chin and Sis Elaine Hoo (Hong Kong).
Church Events

October 21–23: Dining Hall, Spiritual & Evangelical Convocation, Leicester

October 21–23: Happy co-workers, Spiritual & Evangelical Convocation, Leicester

October 22–24: Group photo, Spiritual & Evangelical Convocation, Sunderland

December 24–25: Winter Youth Fellowship, Gifford Park

Forthcoming Events
(March 2013-May 2013)

National:
- March 1–3: Married Couples’ Spiritual Cultivation Retreat, Forest Hill
- March 4–5: UKGA board meeting, London
- March 5–6: Truth Study Committee meeting, London
- March 16–17: Pre-Marriage Course, Newcastle, Pr Michael Chan
- April 8–10: Spiritual & Evangelical Convocation, Portsmouth, Pr Johnny Liu & Pr TK Chin
- April 29: National Brothers’ Fellowship, Gifford Park, Pr Steven Shek
- May 3–6: Youth Camp, Forest Hill
- May 13–14: The 23rd National Sisters’ Fellowship, Edinburgh, Pr Johnny Liu & others
- May 20: The 20th National Evergreen Fellowship, Newcastle, Pr Michael Chan & others
- May 20–21: UKGA board meeting, Edinburgh
- May 25–29: Ministry Volunteers Programme, Sunderland, Pr Michael Chan & Pr Steven Shek
- May 25–June 1: Literary Ministry Seminar, Sunderland, UK DLM
- May 31–June 2: Marriage Course, Portsmouth

Cardiff:
- March 13–24: Pastoral / Training, Pr TK Chin
- May 17–19: Pastoral / Training, Pr FF Chong

Europe:
- March 22–23: Church Workers’ Training, Vienna, Pr FF Chong
- March 28–31: Spring Spiritual Convocation, Heidelberg Prayer House, Pr Johnny Liu
- May 17–20: Spiritual Convocation, Hamburg Prayer House, Pr Ko & Pr Steven Shek

Russia Ministry:
- February 8–March 4: Outreach / Training / Pastoral, Pr Michael Chan
- March 1–25: Outreach / Training / Pastoral, Bro Michael Hsu
- April 4–May 13: Outreach / Training / Pastoral, Pr FF Chong
- May 2–20: Outreach / Training / Pastoral, Pr Steve Hwang (USA)
- May 10–12: Spiritual Convocation, Moscow

Africa Ministry:
- April 8–22: Sierra Leone, Pastoral ministry, Dn Luke Chan & Bro Michael Hsu
- May 2–June 2: Ghana & Togo, Pastoral ministry / Training, Pr TK Chin & volunteer(s)
- May 22–June 18: Zambia, Pastoral ministry / Training, Pr FF Chong & volunteer(s)