Another year for the RE program has quickly come and gone. Thank God for all the time and effort every teacher, student, and parent has contributed to the RE program! We know that the most important goal of the RE program is to bring every student and child to the Lord. As we start a new year, let us evaluate how far we have come in the past year and focus on how we can continue to grow in the Lord.

Someone once made the analogy that passing on our faith to our children and students is like transferring buckets of sand. During our spiritual cultivation, parents and teachers receive sand from God. As we pass on our faith to our children and students, we are pouring sand from our buckets to their buckets. In pouring the sand from bucket to bucket, we inevitably lose some sand. But if we start with more sand, we will be able to pass more sand to our children and students.

As an RE teacher or parent, how much sand did we pass on to our students and children this past year? Even as we worked hard towards all of the other goals we had set for ourselves, did we achieve the most important goal of bringing our children to the Lord? We know that we can pass on only as much sand as we ourselves have received from God. In this coming year, let us draw closer to God in our own relationships with God so that we can bring our students and children even closer to God.

As an RE student, how much sand have we caught in our buckets this past year? Have we tried to catch as much sand as our teachers and parents have poured out to us? Our parents and RE teachers make a lot of sacrifices and do a lot for us. Have we appreciated their efforts and shown our appreciation by trying our best to learn everything they have tried to teach us? If we do not try to catch the sand, our faith will not grow no matter how much sand our parents and RE teachers try to pass on to us. In this coming year, let us seek God’s help and reach out our buckets to catch even more sand.

The continued success of the RE program requires dedication from every teacher, student, and parent. May God continue to guide and bless us all in this very important holy work of bringing every child to the Lord!

~ Sis. Cindy Lee

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I bear my reflections of the summer SSC 2011. This SSC was special because I met a lot of new friends and also because a lot of people received the Holy Spirit. I was one of them.

When I received the Holy Spirit, it felt very peaceful and happy. It was like I was floating in the clouds. Six other brothers and sisters received the Holy Spirit, too. The Holy Spirit was one of the main reasons that made this SSC special but there was something else.

The other special thing was my new friendship with Lauren and Jordan. They were a big part of SSC. SSC wouldn’t be any fun without new friendships.

My favorite teaching was if you take care of and love men, you love Christ. This teaching was very edifying because if you want to serve and love Christ, we must love men. This is a teaching we have to remember.

This SSC was my most edifying SSC so far. May God bless everybody. Amen.

~ Sis. Deborah Lin
Jesus told us to hate our household members as one of His admission requirements. Of course, Jesus does not want us to literally hate our family. He wants us to love everyone, but compared to Him, they should be “worth nothing.” Compared to even our own parents, Jesus should be precedent and our first priority. We should be able to follow Him first to fulfill this requirement.

Jesus also told us to “bear the cross.” By doing this, we must be able to take on Jesus Christ. We must be able to be strong in the Lord and be filled with the Holy Spirit to overcome trials. By bearing the cross, we carry our own self and weaknesses, so that we are able to preach the gospel. We will be able to follow Him in this way by carrying our own trials and strengthening our weaknesses.

The last thing is to forsake what we have. By doing this, we sacrifice all our possessions to follow the Lord. This is love because we give up all our things to be with Jesus and follow in His WAYS. It is love to listen to Him, and He will also love us back if we follow Him. We must forsake what we have to do this.

~ Sis. Sarah Wong
In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I share my reflections on NYTS. In this NYTS, I really learned lots of stuff that we can't learn from the local church. The theme for this NYTS was “Live a Glorious Life.”

During NYTS, I thought about the lifestyle that I had before coming to NYTS. I didn’t feel God was with me all the time because I didn’t really go to church that much. Sometimes, I skipped church for school or personal stuff. On Friday nights, I knew sometimes that I could make it to church but I just didn’t want to. I would be like, “Oh, it’s a long drive... I have to work...” I tried to make up excuses to not go to church.

After NYTS, I feel that I owe God a lot so I have decided to come to church every Friday night if it’s possible, to make it up to God. I want to learn more about God, know more about God, and also draw closer to Him. I especially want to prepare my heart for the next day’s Sabbath. I know that if we are close to God, then we are living a glorious life.

~ Sis. Suli Fang

Kindergarten Class — Q&A

What is your favorite Bible story and why?

**Faith:** Esther. Because I like to play queen.

**Grace:** Fisher of men. Because God told them to go far away to get fish.

**Hannah:** Esther. It is a fun story because she gets to be a queen. She was brave for telling the king that Haman wants to kill the Jews.

**James:** God. Because He is kind and loving.

**Naomi:** Jesus died on the cross. He rise on the third day because He is God.

What are you thankful to God for?

**Naomi:** I am thankful that God make the world.

**James:** I am thankful for birthday party and birthday cake.

**Hannah:** I am thankful for yummy food.

**Grace:** For the food. If God didn’t make food then no one give us food.

**Faith:** Pretty dresses. My family. Food and drinks.
We Are Sojourners and Pilgrims

About two years ago, I took a nine-month trip to Taiwan to study Chinese. Since I was born and raised in the US, I grew up speaking mostly English. Though my parents are Taiwanese, and I have been to Taiwan on holidays before, it still was a foreign land to me. In many circumstances I could feel that I was a foreigner and a stranger there. At the same time I knew that my stay there was temporary and that one day I would come back to the States. As I was ‘passing through,’ I often thought about this Biblical concept—that we are sojourners and pilgrims (cf. 1 Pet 2:11-12).

In fact, from the first few days in Taiwan I found that it was easy for natives to recognize that I was an ABC (American Born Chinese). Though, I looked similar to them—Asian face and all—it was easy to spot a foreigner.

Upon reflection I realized there are a few ways to spot a foreigner. Yet these are also ways that people should be able to see that we are Christians. After all, we are now citizens of heaven. This is not our home; we are also just passing through. We are foreigners and pilgrims here. But do others see Jesus in us?

Speech and Accent
The first way to spot a foreigner is usually by their speech and accent. Though I was speaking Mandarin, inadvertently I would fumble with the grammar, or flip words around. Not to mention, I’m sure people could hear my American accent. No wonder my Chinese teacher immediately asked when she met me, “You’re from America right?” Similarly, when we converse with others here in the USA, we can usually tell if someone is native or not.

Pop Quiz: What is the Christian accent? How can others tell that we belong to a heavenly country by our speech? Hint: Eph 4:29, Col 4:6. Things to think about: Do we often complain, curse, or belittle? When we speak, do we have a Christian accent?

Dress
Another way to spot a foreigner is by their dress. Different countries and cultures have different values in style and fashion. For some cultures, their dress is radically different than Western countries so the difference is obvious (think Middle East, and Indian cultures). But even for countries that dress similarly, over time subtle differences emerge.

Pop Quiz: How should Christians dress? And I do not mean physically. Of course we should be modest and appropriate in what we wear, but is there another type of spiritual clothing we are to wear? Hint: Gal 3:27, Col 3:12-14, especially the verb “put on.” Things to think about: When people see our clothing, does the brand name say “Jesus Christ?”

Food and Drink
Finally, foreigners bring with them their food and drink habits from home. Just like many of our immigrant parents still cook and eat foods from their home, we as Christians should have different eating and drinking habits based on our new heavenly country. When I was in Taiwan, though I love the food, sometimes I would miss American foods like burgers, fries, and wings and try to find places to get them.

Pop Quiz: What is our spiritual food? Hint: Mt 4:4. What is our spiritual drink? Hint: Eph 5:18. Things to think about: Can others see that we have different eating and drinking habits? Do they want to try some too?

I knew from the onset that my trip in Taiwan would only be for 9 months. So I didn’t make any big purchases or buy many souvenirs—I knew that I couldn’t bring it all back to the US. Similarly, as we pass through this world, we should think about if there is anything that we are overly attached too. Is there anything that may hinder us from going Home?

I’m very thankful that through these short time in Taiwan, I was not only able to improve my Chinese reading, speaking, and writing, but all the more, I was able to experience first-hand what our lives as spiritual sojourners should be. May God continue to help us ‘dare to be different’ and not be ashamed of our heavenly kingdom.

~ Bro. Sam Kuo
Praise and thank God, we have one new addition to the church in Houston! Baby Elizabeth Marie-Luise Franz was born on April, 24, 2011. She is the first child of Brother Gregor and Sister Iris Franz.

Like her father, Elizabeth is relaxed and easy-going. At 2 months and 14 days, she already began sleeping through the night for 10 hours. She grumbles only when she feels hungry, has a dirty diaper, or wants to be held. She cries loudly only when she receives an injection. Elizabeth is also big! At 2 months and 14 days, she was 25.5 inches tall and weighed 12 pounds 11 ounces. Her parents are very thankful to God that she is such a healthy and easy-going baby.

Elizabeth is gregarious and enjoys company. She likes to sit on her little chair, watching her Grandma Ruth cooking. If you hold her, she will most likely sit quietly in your arms. She is looking forward to her first RE class in 2015!
R.E. Year End Presentation — 8/27/11

Re presentation:
Brotherly Love

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ please reflect what He has done for you through the end of the year. Not all I want to say is what He has done for you. Secondly I want to show gratitude to God for giving me such wonderful teachers, who have taught me all these wonderful things, and have given my fellow classmates and I a lot to learn.