Reflections from Pastor Yeh

Time flies. My three-year term will end soon, and I thank God that during this time, I have had a great opportunity to be the resident pastor in Houston Church. It has been a pleasure to learn the Bible, serve the Lord, and have fellowship with the brothers and sisters in Houston.

During the past three years, much grace and mercy from Jesus our Lord came upon the church in Houston. I admire the brothers and sisters in how they work for the Lord quietly like oxen, love each other with sincerity like men, have a strong faith in teaching like lions, and have spiritual insight for promoting church work like eagles.

God has also entrusted many truthseekers to us and brought them under our care. This is our privilege and honor, so we should accept it with gratitude and take good care of them. Thank you for your love and care for me in the past three years. May our Lord Jesus Christ remember all your love and labor, and may God continue to guide and bless Houston Church.

~ Pr. Wen-Chuan Yeh

Introducing Our Newest R.E. Additions - Paul and Peter

Which part of China are you from? Shenzhen, Guangdong, China.
Who is older and by how much? Paul is older than Peter, by 15 minutes.

Paul Fang (方祥润)
What’s it like living in China? It’s very convenient in China. You can go anywhere without driving around.
How’s church different in China vs. Houston? The church in China doesn’t have any R.E. classes. It’s a lot more strict here but members from Houston Church are very nice and loving.
What’s your plan for the next 5 years? Finish college for basic English and start working.
What do you want to do when you grow up? I want to become an owner of a business.
What do you like doing for fun? Go on the Internet, play pool, and hang out with friends.

Peter Fang (方祥伟)
What’s it like living in China? You can have so much fun in China and do whatever you want to do.
How’s church different in China vs. Houston? The church in China is a lot smaller but there are more members than here. In Houston, we have a big church with fewer members. Members from Houston Church are very nice and loving.
What’s your plan for the next 5 years? I hope my mom can retire and that I will have my own job to support her.
What do you want to do when you grow up? If it’s possible, I would like to become an owner of a business, same as my brother.
What do you like doing for fun? Play basketball, play pool, and go on the Internet.

TJC in Houston
R.E. Newsletter
2011-2012 Quarter 4
June 2, 2012

Important Dates for Q4:
¬ First Day of Q4... June 2
¬ Last Day of Q4... Aug 25
¬ R.E. Year-End Presentation... Aug 25

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Religious Education
ESSC Reflections

We praise and thank God for another successful ESSC. It’s a blessing for our R.E. students to learn about peace and how it affects them personally. We hope that they can continue to grow in the Lord with each ESSC and glorify His name. Here are each of the students’ reflections from E2 and up.

I have to write about the topic about how God helps me have peace. God helps me have comfort. He also helps me when I am angry at a non-church member by reminding me that I have salvation and he/she doesn’t. It might sound harsh but it is true. To me, peace doesn’t mean calm. It means being sufficient to not have problems or worries. Being peaceful can be fairly loud and yet you have no problems or worries. God can give anyone peace by answering prayers. God can also help others reach peace by helping them in small ways that make a big difference.

~ Bro. Timothy Yen

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I bear my reflections of how He gives me peace. Jesus gives me peace by letting me be at home alone where no-one can bother me when I think or do something. God gives me time to reflect if something major happens that I want to think about. Sometimes when I am mad or upset and I pray, God comforts me. I am not sure how but I just feel better that I am sharing what happens to me with someone else, even if He does not respond. Even though God gives me peace when I pray, the best thing He gave to me to keep peace was the Holy Spirit. God gave it to me to do the right things in times of anger. If I get into an argument with one of my friends we always make up the next day. Praise God, I end my reflections here. Amen.

~ Sis. Deborah Lin

In the name of Jesus Christ, I give my reflections. This ESSC had a theme of peace. The type of peace that God gives is the true peace that takes away all our toils and struggles of life. So, maybe another message during ESSC is that it is through God that we can get this peace. Are there different kinds of peace? I don’t know, I think so. I can think of a peace where it is quiet somewhere and all you can do is think of happy times shared with friends and family. The people usually might think about is something out of a book or something where someone sits outside with no people talking and just birds chirping. But God’s peace is a thousand times better than that peace. I think that God’s peace is the peace that our soul can understand. At that time, when our soul is at peace, we don’t let things get to us. We don’t let things get us mad. We don’t let things that are too sad get to us. We don’t let things get us down. If we have God’s peace, then everything will be joyful. Everything is okay because we don’t have to think about things except for God and His love for us. That sounds like the kind of peace that God gives to us.

~ Bro. Joshua Wong

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I bear my reflections on the 2012 ESSC in Houston. This time, Houston Church had the privilege of having Deacon Huang and Pastor Yeh help us for our Spiritual Convocation. Before this ESSC, my heart was set on so many worldly things. This Spiritual Convocation helped me revive my spiritual being.

In two sermons, I heard Deacon Huang speak about “The Lord Himself is our Peace.” He explained the two meanings for peace: one is about reconciling with God; and one is about making peace with men. I was so moved by the second, about making peace with men. He explained that wherever there are men, there is conflict, and that those who are humble are blessed. Also, Deacon Huang talked about the Holy Spirit helping us in many ways. For example, how it constantly wars with our lusts and desires and how it will help us keep unity in peace. One thing that really moved me in this sermon was to NOT repay evil with evil. In this way, we can be more like God and less like the world around us. This sermon is in my thoughts almost every single day. I see many people around me at school talking about having revenge, fighting, and many other reckless things. In my mind, I think to not repay evil with evil, and to do good to my enemies.

I thank God for bringing Deacon Huang and Pastor Yeh over to Houston to help us with our Spiritual Convocation. The messages they spoke of moved many in Houston Church. The messages they brought encourage me to live for Christ, to draw closer to God, and to not be like the world. This ends my reflections. May all the glory and praise be given unto His holy name. Amen.

~ Sis. Sophia Wong
In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I give a reflection. During the ESSC I felt so close to God and I knew He was with me the whole time. Also, I felt all my burdens were being taken away by God. The ESSC topic was about peace. We know in this society it is very hard to find peace, because Satan has control of the world. Therefore, we all need peace. If we are living in this world without peace, then there is no point of living, which means Satan is taking over control of us. Real peace comes from our Heavenly Father and I believe if I keep following my Lord Jesus Christ, then I will live in peace. May all the glory belong to our Heavenly Father. Hallelujah, Amen.

~ Sis. Suli Fang

Throughout the ESSC, I realized that I was living in a world without peace. I have been so busy with school, work, and personal stuff that I’ve slowly turned away from God. Because I have so many things to take care of, I would always have a lack of sleep and then I would fall asleep during services. But after ESSC, I found out that God is the only one who can truly give me peace, and I can rest in the arms of God. May all the praise be unto God’s name.

~ Bro. Henry Lin

I have found no matter how much comfort we receive from people, God’s love and protection for us surpasses all. When we have difficulties in our life, our first instinct is to go to something tangible, but then I ask myself, “How does God feel when we don’t go to Him first?” This ESSC, I learned having full reliance and knowing He is guiding our every step is what is going to give us true peace. I know if I follow His way, He will have something good for us planned and guide us, and that in itself is very comforting. Thank God and may all the praise and glory be unto His name.

~ Sis. Sarah Wong

Say “Cheese!”
Getting to Know Your Holy Workers

What was R.E. like when you were growing up?
When I was in R.E., it was held on Sunday mornings from 9 to 11. In the beginning, all students had to line up outside the chapel, and the teacher would play the organ. Once we heard the hymnal music, we marched to the classroom, and dropped the offering into a small box. I thought this practice would discipline students in the spirit of godliness.

Do you think teachers were more strict back then versus now?
Back then, we did not have much training for teachers, our teachers were more simple-minded and strict because the environment of the society around them was simple. In those days we did not have as many distractions such as TV, computers, or the Internet.

Were you a good student or a bad student?
I think I was a good R.E. student.

What do you think are the biggest challenges for R.E. students today?
The biggest challenge for R.E. students today is the media. We rely deeply on the media everyday; our life has been invaded by and influenced by the media. Some media are good while some are not. We should be careful of what we see and what we hear. The Holy Spirit will help us to filter bad media out of our minds and to avoid ungodly media.

Having a heart to serve God is truly a blessing but did you know you would be pastoring/ministering at that age?
I did not know at a young age.

What did/do you like to do for fun?
When I have free time, I like to play the violin and do Sudoku puzzles for fun.

Deacon Paul Wong

What was R.E. like when you were growing up?
I grew up in Ipoh, Malaysia, where we had the True Jesus Church. I was one year old when I was healed of diphtheria (a disease of the throat) after my baptism. We did not have any R.E. classes in our church during the time when I grew up as a boy from 6 to 10. All the R.E. training that I had during those years were from the elementary school that was ran by an American missionary from the Methodist Church. Their teachers were all Christians and the lessons that we learned were very basic ones like what we have in our church today.

Do you think teachers were more strict back then versus now?
Our church held services every evening from Monday through Friday. On Saturday, we had our Sabbath
services. I attended all the services with my grandmother and parents regularly. I was blessed with my grandmother and parents who were like my R.E. teachers in the church and at home. My grandmother was uneducated but she was a model Christian, full of love and compassion. My father seldom used the cane and he would teach us what is right and what is wrong. My mother was a strict disciplinarian. When we did something wrong she would sternly scold us then cane us.

Were you a good student or a bad student?  
As a youth I loved sports. At one time I spent too much time in sports and neglected my studies, and as a result I failed badly in a term examination. My father at that time was one of the teachers in the American Mission School (ACS Ipoh). He was sad at my failure but was not angry with me. He arranged for the school principal, who was also the pastor of the church, to talk with me. The school principal was very gentle and kind. He was positive in his teaching. He told me that I was intelligent and should be at the top of the class. He encouraged me to stretch my greatest potential. He said there is nothing wrong with sports but I should have a balanced life as a student. The school was very famous for teaching students to develop the body, soul, and spirit. I never forgot the school principal’s teaching. In the next term examination, I scored very high and became second in my class.

What do you think are the biggest challenges for R.E. students today?  
The biggest challenges facing R.E. students today are these things:
1. Knowing the difference of the truths that are taught in the Bible by our R.E. teachers and what is taught in the public schools such as creationism verses evolution.
2. Keeping the Sabbath holy from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset. Not doing the things that they normally do during the whole Sabbath day.
3. Not wasting precious time on the computer with social media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. The worst thing is playing violent computer games.

Having a heart to serve God is truly a blessing but did you know you would be pastoring/ministering at that age?  
When I was about ten years old my grandmother was very sick and feeble. My father and uncles were carrying her on a bed walking towards the house where I was born. She suddenly shouted “Hallelujah”, was filled with the Holy Spirit, and spoke with tongues. After they laid her bed down in the middle of the living room, she wanted to see all her grandchildren. I was at her bedside and she spoke to me, “Be a good boy and serve the Lord.” After seeing all her grandchildren, she gazed into heaven and said, “I am going home.” After her death, the whole room was full of fragrance. I was not aware at that time when my grandmother spoke to me that I would be a deacon, but her last wish for me has been fulfilled.

What did/do you like to do for fun?  
When I was a kid I loved to watch the Tarzan movies, and wanted to build a house on the tree top like Tarzan’s. I did build one tiny house on top of a cherry tree. That was fun. I like building things. I love my profession as an architect. I enjoyed building houses, and I still do now. One of my favorite verses in the Bible is Hebrews 3:4: “For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.”