Hallelujah! Praise and thank God this past winter we were able to hold the Central Region Winter Student Spiritual Convocation at Dallas Church. A total of 46 students from Chicago, Denver, Austin, Houston, and Dallas, came to study the word of God, devote time to prayer, and have fellowship in Christ. Thanks to God’s arrangement, Pr. Wen Yeh, Pr. Jason Hu, Dn. Paul Ho, and Bro. Patrick Wong were able to teach classes this time.

The theme this time was: A Life of Prayer. It was a fitting theme for a generation that faces an increasing amount of stress from school and is constantly being bombarded by various temptations. During the week of SSC, the students were able to take refuge from their daily struggles and distractions. To return to God and find the true peace and joy He gives.

The curriculum for the E2, J1, J2, and Senior classes included the following: The Holy Spirit, Prayer of the Saints, James (E2, J2/Senior), 2 Timothy (J2), Fruit of the Holy Spirit, Prayer With Understanding (E2), Making the Wise Choice in Media (E2), Wisdom of Self-Control (J1), and Growing in the Life of Faith (J2). In addition to the main curriculum, we also had Special Topic classes such as Fruit of the Holy Spirit Activity, Using the Internet Wisely (E2), Apologetics Roleplay Exercise (J1, J2/Senior), Mock Church Council (J1, J2/Senior), and Dating & Marriage (J1, J2/Senior).

Thank God many students and counselors were edified and spiritually renewed during course of this SSC. Thanks to the love and labor of countless members in Dallas church and all the dedication of the speakers and counselors, logistically the SSC also went very smoothly.

Looking back now at four months later, we still cannot help but give thanks and praise to God for giving us such a wonderful week. We have learned how to serve one another in love, study the word of God together in truth, and pray together in the unity of the Spirit. May we continue to grow spiritually daily and become a house that truly the house of prayer.

Daniel Jeng, Counselor
In the name of Lord Jesus Christ I say my reflection. I want to practice one of my teacher’s teachings: 5 fingers: Praising the Lord, thanksgiving, what to do/what we are doing, request, and closing I also want to pray more at home, before eating, before sleeping, and before school.

I also want to concentrate when I pray and pray for others.

Here are some praising sentences I learned...

Lord, You are my rock, You are my defense, You are my teacher, You are my supporter, You are my master, You are my shepherd, You are my Savior, and You are the true, awesome, wonderful, terrific, loving, caring, faithful, great God!

May you be blessed! AMEN!!

Vivi Liu, E2

In the name of Lord Jesus Christ I bear a reflection of my second SSC. One of the most important things I learned is that it’s very easy to offend others. I want to change my attitude, behavior, and my anger, but I can’t. I have the desire to but I can’t. I can’t without God’s help. Sometimes if we get angered, we don’t think and just blurt something out, just like my problem. I just don’t have self-control. I need my desire to change and the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit.

On Tuesday, our whole group was so close to touching God, but after closing prayer, I started to lose focus again. On Wednesday, we lost complete focus. I looked around and my old self came back. Then our teacher shared a verse with us. When we are close to God, Satan comes like a roaring lion seeing who he can swallow. This taught me that we have to pray and avoid Satan.

My determination after SSC is to pray more and not to use addictive media for so long. May all the glory be unto His holy name. Amen. Hallelujah!

“Super Mysterious Anonymous” E2 Student
In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I give a reflection about the teachings I learned at this Winter SSC 2010.

Praise God for all the teachings I learned this SSC. Just from seeing that the theme was a Life of Prayer, I already knew this SSC would substantially make a difference in my spiritual life.

I got to learn about so many things I had not known before. For example, I learned about the Holy Spirit and what it can be related to, like wind. You can’t see it, but you can feel it. It comforts you in times of need.

One of the most reflective and helpful subjects was the Fruit of the Spirit. If you don’t have all nine, it is simply easy to say that you don’t have the fullness of the Holy Spirit. “Against such there is no law,” it says in Galatians 5:23.

In the past five SSCs I have been to, during the actual week of SSC, I am very fervent in prayers and live a life for God. But we all know it is so very hard to continue to live this life all the time. But this time, I have the biggest determined mind to keep on living this life. I will pray as much as I can in my extra time. I will concentrate in my prayers no matter how hard the devil is trying to prey on me.

Brothers and sisters, let us all live a life of prayer. May all the glory and praise be given unto His holy name. Amen.

Sophia Wong, E2

The first two days at SSC compared to my life are very very different. They differ because at home, I don’t really pray that long, so these two and a half days made me feel really close to God. How I physically feel at home is that I am not really that joyful, but these two and a half days have helped me to be more like the characteristics of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. That’s what we learned these two and a half days. Spiritually at SSC, I felt that I was really holy and very close to God. Spiritually at home, I felt that God didn’t really answer my prayers. For everything I prayed for, I felt that there was a wall between me and God. Also, at home, I usually open my eyes during pray and don’t concentrate. I think that’s why I felt that way. In the past two and a half days of SSC, I felt really really concentrated because I tried to close my eyes in my prayers. I had been encouraged by the pastors and deacons to pray harder, so that’s all what I’ve learned in these two and a half days of SSC.

David Pan, J1

What happened this week in SSC is that on Wednesday, at the evening prayer, I was moved by the Holy Spirit. Now during prayers, my hands just started moving all the time. So does my entire body.

I’m determined to get Holy Spirit after SSC ends so that I have the ticket to heaven. When I do die with Holy Spirit, I’ll be able to rise up and meet God.

So that is my reflection after the SSC. May God bless you!

Annabelle Cheng, E2
Student Reflections (continued)

These days at SSC have been very different and are like a spiritual boot camp for both physical and spiritual reasons.

For some physical reasons, waking up at 7 is a real test on stamina. Also, kneeling down for prayer is pretty hard for these long times. Also, fasting is hard for my body. But going through fasting is also connected to spiritual reasons.

Fasting is made much easier by prayer. When I pray, I don’t feel hungry at all. Also, here, there is much more to pray about with all the brothers and sisters’ prayer requests. This is really helpful to my prayers because I have more to concentrate on.

Overall, here at SSC, my abilities and stamina in both the physical and spiritual aspects grew. Gladly, though, all the pastors and teachers and counselors all help us to withstand and try as hard as we can.

William Ariton, J1

Fruit of the Holy Spirit = 1 fruit, 9 different flavors

The SSC so far is like boot camp, except a little easier on the physical part. Physically, I have tried hard. I kneel upright until I get very tired. I think physically, since I don’t pray much at home, it’s painful. Mainly my knees hurt. But the exercise time really helps. I will probably use those when I get home. But I think spiritually is more important. I think I’ve grown spiritually. I’ve been praying hard, and I’ve had times when I feel like I almost got the Holy Spirit, but then the bell rings. Another thing I realized is that, since at home I don’t pray much, so my knees hurt, but when you’re in a deep prayer, it doesn’t really matter to you if it hurts. And I also had gotten used to it hurting. The Bible stories I learned, and the lessons taught by the pastors I think can really help me. I will try my best to be more “spiritual.” I really do think I learned a lot. And most people think that religion is like not important, and that you can believe in any religion. Well, I’ve discovered that it’s not true. Religion is part of your life and you should respect it. When I get home, I can’t wait to show my knowledge with Tampa church. I will also try to preach more often.

Andy Xu, J1

Fruit of the Spirit Song

The fruit of the Spirit’s not a coconut,
The fruit of the Spirit’s not a coconut,
Cuz if you wanna be a coconut.
You might as well hear it,
You can’t be a fruit of the Spirit.

REFRAIN:
Cuz the fruit is
love, joy, peace, patience,
kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
gentleness and self-control.

The fruit of the Spirit’s not a lemon,
The fruit of the Spirit’s not a lemon,
Cuz if you wanna be a lemon.
You might as well hear it,
You can’t be a fruit of the Spirit.

(REFRAIN)

The fruit of the Spirit’s not a watermelon,
The fruit of the Spirit’s not a watermelon,
Cuz if you wanna be a watermelon.
You might as well hear it,
You can’t be a fruit of the Spirit.

(REFRAIN)

The fruit of the Spirit’s not a pineapple,
The fruit of the Spirit’s not a pineapple,
Cuz if you wanna be a pineapple.
You might as well hear it,
You can’t be a fruit of the Spirit.

(REFRAIN)
The Holy Spirit is very evident in my life. When I’m empty it fills me with its wonderful waters that quench my thirst. When I’m seeking pleasure from the world and my peers, the Holy Spirit comforts me with its presence. Like the wind, I want to preach the gospel every time I feel it. Like fire to metal, it refines me and molds me into the person that it wants me to be. Although I fight it sometimes, it always in some way or another wins. Like the dew on the grass, it comforts me in my affections and cools me down from the world. And when I want to give up and throw in the towel, I remember that my work is not in vain. My reward is in heaven, for the promised Holy Spirit is a deposit that marks and seals me.

Brandon Curry, J2

The Holy Spirit helps me in many ways that I sometimes overlook. Even as I live busily each day, I rarely get the time to actually stop and think about what the Holy Spirit has done for me.

The Holy Spirit can satisfy our desire for any kind of physical need. Every time I fast and pray, the hunger that once seemed almost unconquerable becomes tamed.

The Holy Spirit is also efficient in softening our hearts. Every time when I get into an argument with my parents, I always talk back being the prideful and selfish person I am. Yet, once I have calmed down from my anger, it always hits me that I shouldn’t have talked back and simply obeyed my parents. The pride that was in me then transforms into a sense of guilt and remorse. Following this transformation, my guilt leads me into repentance to ask God for forgiveness and cleanse me of my impurities.

As the loving God He is, He will forgive us because His precious son died for all of our sins both old and new. With these intimate experiences, we will bear the characteristics of the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

While old habits are hard to break, as long as we sincerely try our hardest, God will be with us for a long time.

Thomas Hsu, J2

When I was in 2nd grade, I experienced the Holy Spirit for the first time. It was in June of 2000 during a Spiritual Convocation in Dallas. I remember during that Spiritual Convocation, I prayed innocently and constantly for the Holy Spirit. I kept asking God, “Please give me the Holy Spirit; I don’t want to go to hell.” This was my prayer. I wanted to go to heaven so badly and was afraid of hell. I also knew having the Holy Spirit was necessary to go to heaven. I kept telling God that if I received the Holy Spirit, I would be a better kid. During one of the prayer sessions, as I was praying earnestly, I felt a heat come over me, and my tongue began to change and my hands began to vibrate. After the prayer, Pastor Chen informed me that I had received it. I was in complete joy when I realized that I got it. Praise God!

Throughout my life, the Holy Spirit has been a guide. When I feel as though I am filled with the Holy Spirit, I am able to walk the right path and avoid temptations. Also, being filled with the Holy Spirit has given me true peace and joy that I have not felt with anything else. The Holy Spirit gives me wisdom as well: Wisdom to discern what is right and wrong. Furthermore, having the Holy Spirit in and of itself is a...
means of preaching for me. People notice that I am different and want to know more about my church. With the Holy Spirit, I am able to reflect Christ through my actions and am able to touch others.

Oliver Lo, J2

When I received the Holy Spirit, it was a very joyous occasion for me. Just like water is used to grow and help plants mature, I could see and experience myself maturing in my faith. I was able to push myself and successfully read the whole Bible once through. I know that the Holy Spirit acts like water/fire in another way. It helps cleanse me and refines me from dross. I can sometimes feel, when I pray fervently and sincerely, the Holy Spirit praying for me to help cleanse away my sins.

Another way is just as how water can make dry soil soft and useable, God has, in this way, used the Holy Spirit in me. Sometimes before SSC, my heart is hardened and I dread coming here. However, after a few prayers, my heart is soft or open to God's words, and I am able to take in God's teachings with an open heart.

The Holy Spirit also brings comfort to me. Similarly to how water has a strong effect on the temperature, not allowing it to waver very much, the Holy Spirit comforts me when I am in distress or upset about events that happen in my life.

Something that I value highly from the Holy Spirit is its guidance. I know that decisions I make based off of prayer will be right and successful because the Holy Spirit is fire that can light our path for us.

Ricky Ariton, Senior

A few years ago, I was asked to become an RE teacher. I hesitantly agreed, even though I really did not want to become one. When I taught for the first time, I did not prepare well and just wanted to get it over with.

While praying during SSC, my heart stayed hardened, and I did not want to fully submit to becoming an RE teacher. I felt that I was a horrible teacher and that teaching was not something I had a gift for.

During one NYTS, the Holy Spirit moved me to at least try my best when I teach. My heart softened, which allowed me to truly submit to becoming an RE teacher. After NYTS, I realized that I had to cleanse myself in order to become holy enough to teach my students. I had to be a doer of what I taught and to set a good example. I felt the Holy Spirit refined me, causing me to enjoy teaching and desire to become a better servant of God. I really experienced God's light guide me to the right direction. Now I love my RE students, enjoy teaching, and desire to spread the gospel to my students so that they understand their faith.

Andrew Lo, Senior
Central Region WSSC 2010

Counselor Reflections & Encouragements

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ I share a few words on the recent winter student spiritual convocation at Dallas, TX. This was actually my very first SSC, had never attended a SSC before because I was introduced and baptized in the church in my mid 20’s. During a week of secluding myself from the outside world, I felt like I was living on the top of a mountain and I was able to focus more in my prayers. In the daily routines of my life, I usually fill my days with providing cares for my loved ones at home and difficult for me to spend quality times with God. However during the week of SSC, I was not only able to draw closer to God, but also had an opportunity to serve God. I had to admit that it was not easy for me to be away from my family but I thank God for I have an understanding husband taking care of my son at home. Without his supports, I didn’t think I had the courage to attend this SSC.

From where I come which is Austin, TX, since we are not a church yet, we do not have many church events. We only get to see pastors twice a year like spiritual congregation. On the weekly Sabbath, we get together at one of the family member’s house to have family gatherings. We watch live streams from Dallas instead of attending services in the chapels. We have three RE classes in Austin but there is only 1 or 2 students in the class, so the RE students in Austin do not get to see their friends weekly. Being able to attend services in the chapel, attending various church events, having a regular RE classes at church – to me, these are the blessings from God and I always feel spiritual lifted when I attend Sabbath services or church events at different church locations.

I pray to God to give me strength to apply what I learned from the SSC into my daily life, and disciplines to maintain a life of prayer. Let’s set this as a goal and strive for success till we meet Him— “I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14).

Evelyn Chew, E2 Counselor

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (Gal 5:22-23)

Without his supports, I didn’t think I had the courage to attend this SSC.

Hallelujah! In the name of Jesus Christ I share my reflections. It truly was a blessing to be able to go up to Dallas and help out with this past Student Spiritual Convocation. During this SSC, I took time to think about the time I had spent in the hospital just prior to SSC, and in doing so, I was truly reminded of James 4:13-15. --Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall
Counselor Reflections (continued)

live and do this or that.” -- Truly God’s mercy has been continually shining down upon us all, but how quickly we forget.

James Lee, J2 Counselor

Dear students:

“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” (Heb. 3:12-13)

Amber Chang, J1 Counselor

Praise and thank God for His guidance throughout Winter SSC 2010. Everything went really smoothly, the weather was pleasantly mild, and all students behaved well. I could truly feel the wonderful guidance of Holy Spirit throughout the whole week, from all the lessons taught, special topics, and during prayers. We had really good sharing times between J2 girls and senior girls every night from imagining what heaven looks like, personal experience receiving Holy Spirit for the first time and also sharing our goals after SSC. Most of us promised or agreed to continue a life of prayer by interceding for each other even after SSC. I am truly blessed to be able to come and helped out even just a few days after he recovered. May God bless and guide everyone until next SSC.

God bless you.

Lenny Wong, J2 Counselor

Hallelujah SSC participants!

Thank God this SSC went smoothly. I really learned a lot this time, not only from the E2 classes I sat in on, but also from serving God with my fellow counselors and bonding with my group, Group Love!

From my group, I was reminded of the pure desire and feeling of need for the Holy Spirit. I was reminded of when I first received the Holy Spirit and how it changed my life and my character. I was also reminded of the heart we should have when pursuing God, that we should have simplicity in faith and purity in motives. Thank God for this opportunity!

From my fellow counselors, I learned to truly love and care for my students and to have a heart of compassion towards them. I learned to forget the past and move forward, pressing forward to live for God and running towards our goal of eternal life. I also learned what it meant to be humble in servitude. Thank God for allowing me to work with all the counselors!

From class, I learned to praise God more and that thanking and praising God were two different things! I was also reminded of how powerful the Holy Spirit is in our lives, so we need to put our trust in Him to overcome our weaknesses and troubles instead of always relying on ourselves. God is faithful to us, so we must be faithful to Him. Thank God for all these lessons!

All in all, I hope to take these lessons I learned during SSC from my students, fellow counselors, and teachers and apply them in my daily life. Let us not forget the goals we made after SSC ended, and let us continue to improve in our character, faith, and conduct little by little every day!

May everyone continue to pray hard for the Holy Spirit and the fullness of the Holy Spirit so that we may bear His fruit. May we become more and more like Jesus every moment of our lives. May we continue in
Counselor Reflections (continued)

the Lord and follow His will and not our own.

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

God bless!

Priscilla Lo, E2 Counselor

Thank God for this SSC.

It's not every day when you can eat all your favorite foods for a whole week (including snacks and desserts!). Or exercise with your counselors (like special exercise with Daniel. Star jumps!). Or laugh at silly videos like "Just get a cat...". Or sing cool songs like, "...gentleness and self-control-ol-ol!" (I can't believe that song is still stuck in my head!). Or hang out with all the cool kids from Austin, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Houston, or Tampa (great to meet all of you!). Or take awesome silly pictures with your group and counselor. Or sing from the heart hymns of prayer. Or learn how to really produce those fruit of the Holy Spirit. Or share those tough spiritual problems with each other, the counselors, and the ministers. Or actually study in depth the books of James or 2 Timothy. Or dwell in the house of the Lord to behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire at His temple. Or, better yet, finally catch up with God by prayer in all those praises, confessions, communions, and requests. Or, and most importantly, learn to live a life of prayer both at church and at home.

It's a shame that it's not every day that we can spend our lives like we did at SSC. But it doesn't mean that we can't come close. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). So let's continue steadfastly in the lessons that we have learned this SSC. Let's continue in fellowship within our respective local churches and without (after all, it's not only at SSC that we have fellowship with one another). Let's continue to serve God and to serve each another. And finally, let's continue to spend the time in prayer. Every day. The point of SSC is not only that you can be renewed at church for one week, but also that you can be renewed at home for the rest of your lives.

Hope y'all had a wonderful SSC! And I'll be expecting all of y'all to keep up a life of prayer 'til we meet again!

Nate Kuo, J1 Counselor

Dear students, sometimes you give me stress, but you are always a delight. Dear counselors, you are a blessing from day one and have given me strength. Dear instructors, we thank God for having sent you. Dear unnamed believers who toil behind the scenes, we don't always see you but are grateful nonetheless.

Hallelujah! Truly, God is worthy of praise. Praise the Lord! Hallelujah!

Daniel Jeng, J2 Counselor

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

(2 Tim 3:7)
Btw, registration for the 2011 Summer SSC is now open. From June 26 (6pm) to July 1 (6pm). Please see your local RE Coordinator for more info. 😊