



66

hear ^{deaf}
speak ^{mute}

The deaf *hear* and the mute *speak*

33 And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. 34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” 35 And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. 37 And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

Mark 7:33-35, 37 ESV

Ephphatha



Today's Question

What helps
you notice the
Divine Presence?

REFLECTION

Today's Scripture Reading : Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23 Psalm 125 James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17 Mark 7:24-37

IN PRAYER
WE PRESENT OUR
THOUGHTS TO GOD


By Henri Nouwen
henrinouwen.org

PRAYER
of the week

Creator God,

Help me
find the sacred
in each
God-given
moment.

Amen.



To *pray*, I think, does not mean to think about God in contrast to thinking about other things, nor does it mean spending time with God instead of spending time with other people. As soon as we begin to divide our thoughts into thoughts about God and thoughts about other things, like people and events, we separate God from our daily life. At that point God is allocated to a pious little niche in some corner of our lives where we only think pious thoughts and experience pious feelings.

Although it is important and even indispensable for our spiritual lives to set apart time for God and God alone, our prayer can only become unceasing [*p r a y e r*] when all our thoughts—beautiful or ugly, high or low, proud or shameful, sorrowful or joyful—can be thought in the presence of the One who dwells in us and surrounds us. By trying to do this, our unceasing thinking is converted into unceasing prayer, moving us from a self-centred monologue to a God-centered dialogue.

To do this we want to try to convert our thoughts into conversation. The main question, therefore, is not so much what we think, but to whom we present our thoughts.



PRAYER: A CONVERSATION & EXPERIENCE WITH GOD

By SS Cheah

A few months ago the WEW group decided that we needed something fresh for the soul. The MCO was draining many of us and we agreed we had to stay more connected to each other at a deeper level. More importantly we had to stay connected to God, even in a world today, where physical contact was limited. We felt God had a bigger plan for this group and through prayer, He led us to form prayer partners within the group.

At the start, we didn't know how this would work. So we drew "lots" (yes believe or not, we did that!) and allowed God to lead and "paired us up" and came up with a framework to make this a safe space for everyone to feel comfortable and have God In the centre of it all.

Ironically, just last week, I had to teach the Children in our children ministry about prayer. One day before the lesson, I went through a crisis at work. Without going through the details, in summary if the crisis was not resolved by midnight Sunday, it would lead to a breach that could result in me loosing my job.

What is more, there is also room to "assign blame" since we were late in sending the approvals, thus escalating the problem. So hurtful words were exchanged through the process, which left me feeling helpless and worthless (I guess some of us can relate to this!).



**LIFE
GROUP
SHARING**

“... I was tired,
shaken up,
beaten up. I
wondered, how
was I going to
be ready for
the next
morning?
..”

Thoughts and scenarios were running through my head of what a bad leader I was, why I didn't see this coming. I should have done this better, I could have took a different decision earlier, did this instead of that. All these were playing tricks on my mind. That Saturday was a dark path, and all I could do was to cling to God and appealed to my prayer partner and some of my close friends to pray. After much tears, a nerve wrecking wait and WhatsApp app prayers, our desperate cry in prayer was answered while I was on a call with a close sister who offered to pray with me. The “crises” was resolved, we literally scraped through just hours before the hard deadline of midnight.

I still had to deal with the aftermath and rampage due to the close call and near miss -- so there were still hurtful words exchanged, very bad reviews from my superiors. I haven't totally recovered from the trauma of it all. Most of us had probably gone through crisis before, whether it's work or personal that leaves a scar in our hearts. After all this experience, I couldn't sleep well, and guess what -- I had to teach the children the next morning on prayer. I was tired, shaken up, beaten up. I wondered, how was I going to be ready for the next morning?

As I reflected, on what I termed as a “paradox”, in a very weird way, I thanked God for this experience because every word that came out of the children ministry the next morning made so much sense to me. What happened to me is not just what we see in the movies where in the last minutes, the hero comes to save the day! Things turn around on the last second! These experiences were also evident in the Bible. The world we live in, can be hard and cruel. We make mistakes, things don't go as planned, things turn for the worse... God comes to answer our cry for help. I can't believe work took up so much of my energy and spirit... and this was just work at the end of the day, but the world today has so much more suffering, hurt, pain, confusion, unfairness and it's so easy to miss the point and worse, miss His calling.

This was what I taught the children that morning. I shared with the children that they can talk to God anytime, anywhere. God hears us and I shared a few examples in the Bible of different ways we can pray.



**LIFE
GROUP
SHARING**

I am not a fan of using Alphabets to summarise a message but this helped me articulate the message in a simpler way to the children. I used the word **P R A Y** to illustrate 4 ways we can pray to God based on a video I came across.

We can pray to God by:

1) P- Praising Him.

An example of this will be the story of Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20), who gave praise to God before the battle begun! As a result, the enemies started attacking each other and to cut the long story short, he won the battle! We all go through “battles” in life. It’s not easy to praise God in the midst of our battles but this is a strong reminder that we can praise Him in ALL circumstances just the way Jehoshaphat went ahead of the army & uttered these words “Give Thanks to the Lord, for His love endures forever”. I pray that we too can cling on to this promise.

2) R- Repentance.

We all know the story of David & Bathsheba. When the Lord sent Nathan to him, David repented and we all have heard the famous Psalm 51, and I am reminded of the song “Search Me, Know Me”.. *one of verse goes with, “Create in me a clean heart Lord”*. We all mess up at times and this was a gracious reminder to know that the Lord is waiting for us to return to Him. We only need to knock (Matt. 7:7) and this brings me to the next way we can pray which is non other than to “ask” God -- even for forgiveness during times of worthlessness.

3) A- Ask.

I am reminded of the beautiful promise of Hannah who asked God for a son. (1 Samuel 1). And the beauty of her petition was that she promised God that if He gave her a son, she will give him back to the Lord. Isn’t that weird, You ask God for something and then say you’ll give the gift back to God? That showed her desperate cry and her genuine heart. A year later, God granted Hannah’s wish and Hannah did exactly what she promised God. The story of Samuel can also be used to illustrate the next way we can pray which is to yield.

4) Y- Yield to God.

Which means to give it all to him and let Him take control. God called Samuel in the middle of the night (1 Samuel 3), and after speaking to Eli, Samuel yielded and answered “*Here I am Lord*”. Can we say this to the Lord and let Him take control in our lives? Food for thought...



In summary, after just around 5 months after having a prayer partner, I have learnt a few things about prayer from my prayer partner and also from the ladies in WEW..

These are some points I learnt so far, and the learning journey has not ended. I am still learning:



1) A Prayer Partner is A Great Support!

For those of us who are more independent, and rather push our feelings aside to “deal with it later”, having a prayer partner keeps us in check and allows us to be more vulnerable and accountable to each other (though it’s difficult for us to “let our guard down”). It’s so important to allow God to work on our vulnerable areas because God wants to work in us for His strength is made perfect in our weakness.



2) Big or Small, It Doesn't Matter!

There is no problem too big or too small for the Lord. He is interested in our lives and wants to walk with us in our journey. The question is - are we letting him take control.

3) Coming into Presence with God

At the end of the day, prayer is essentially simply having a conversation and experience with God, Anytime, anywhere, just as we are, in anyway comfortable to us even for those who feel they can't speak or express fluently. It transcends language or cultural barriers. I went through a prayer in Arabic with my prayer partner (as she wasn't comfortable with the English Language). Although I didn't understand the words, I “felt” the prayer and could feel the Lord's presence so real that I was in tears while she was praying. How was that possible when I didn't understand the language?

That was a powerful reminder to me because our God is a God who understands and knows everything.

“He knows exactly
who we are and
what we need.”



“I used to pray and express my deepest interpretations even through contemporary dance. ... and that taught me that we can express His love through creative ways as well, not confined to verbal language or a language we box ourselves to.”

I used to pray and express my deepest interpretations even through contemporary dance. (Ok, Ok, I was much much younger then!), but I was reminded of this in the last few months, and that taught me that we can express His love through creative ways as well, not confined to verbal language or a language we box ourselves to. Some do this better with writing, with our hands, with creative arts, with music, with any other gifts... endless ways we can express to Him. That thought is amazing. We can come to Him just as we are, with all our gifts, no matter what they are.

I would encourage all to pray not just based on the examples I mentioned above, but more importantly to get the Lord lead the way. For those of you who don't have prayer partners and want to have prayer partners, it's never too late to start. I have benefitted a lot in this journey in very humbling ways.

I will end this sharing with a verse someone blessed me with. *Psalm 91*. I will just quote the first 2 verses here but would encourage you to read the whole Psalm in your own free time:

“He who dwells in the shelter of the most high will rest in the Shadow of the almighty. I will say of the Lord - He is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust.”





PRAYER IS A POWERFUL WEAPON”

By Ee Lyn, Chan
& Sheh-Ren, Koh

“*Prayer is a powerful weapon*”, Auntie Nancy Cheah reminded all of us during one of our WEW meeting. Very true indeed, as we witness GOD answering many of our prayers in His time and according to His sovereign ways.

We praise the LORD for granting us the opportunity to pray together and to witness His Sovereignty. The journey has raised our faith above our circumstances. We began to lean on GOD as we encourage each other to look to GOD in times of needs, soon to realise that GOD Himself is our greatest need. We also learned to pray for the needs of others, learning to love our neighbours as ourselves.

Grateful to the LORD for our journey of praying-together. “For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them” (Matthew 18:20). We both truly experienced His presence, grace and guidance in our family lives, ministries, businesses, and especially our walk with the LORD, through prayers and His words of encouragement. We started the journey almost 5 years ago, and ever since then our relationship with GOD and with each other has deepened.



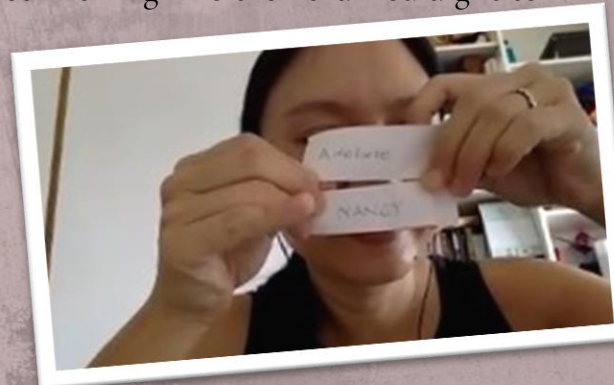
**LIFE
GROUP
SHARING**

“He has hosted all of our vulnerability, pains and joys as we shared our prayer needs. We realise that it is more than just praying, it is building relationships and trust with our prayer buddies.”

In simple faith, we prayed for more to experience GOD's goodness through prayer. In no time, the Holy Spirit moved a large group of ladies to commit to start prayer buddies. With butterflies in our stomachs, the group of us prayerfully balloted the prayer buddy pairs, not knowing who the Lord would gift to us.

“Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven..”

Matthew 18: 18 ESV



That was 5 months ago. This month we share our journeys no longer just between us, but together as a larger community of women. With heartfelt thanksgiving, we thank the LORD for how He has hosted all of our vulnerability, pains and joys as we shared our prayer needs. We realise that it is more than just praying, it is building relationships and trust with our prayer buddies. There is always something to pray for... unending work, stress, broken family, fussy eaters, demanding boss, unwell sister, disheartened worker, long-awaited salvation of a loved one, restless children, unappreciated member, and the list goes on and on as GOD moulds us.

Thank GOD there is hope as we pray, that GOD is indeed Sovereign and actively at work. He will meet us wherever we are at, whenever we are in need and whatever the situation we are in.

Quoting from Pr. Thomas on his sermon on, *A Discerning Life* (15 August 2021), - where he reminded us to focus on things that matters and eternal, which are relationships with men/women which GOD placed in our lives. I think GOD intended us to build relationship not only with Him but also with people. May the grace of GOD enable us to extend His grace and love to those He entrusted to us.

**LIFE
GROUP
SHARING**



“Focus on things that matters and eternal, which are relationships with men/women which GOD placed in our lives.”

- Rev. Thomas

PRAYER

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

Eph 4:1-3 ESV.

Church (Body of Christ)

- a) Pray for the Church to continue to be relevant and practical in helping those in need. For God's protection for the nation, and an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. (Matt 5:14-16).
- b) Pray the believers will make all effort to keep the unity of the Spirit (Pray Eph. 4: 2-6)
- c) Pray believers will have a great love for the nation, and be a witness by having a great love for one another in the Body of Christ,

Nation

- a) Pray for the newly elected PM, the new government administration for clearly designated, competent leaders to run this country.
- b) For wisdom for authorities in this National Recovery Phase (NRP).
- c) Pray for the the leadership to prioritize the well-being of all, proactive to stop corruption and end to all forms of racism. (Psalm 75)
- d) For the upcoming parliamentary sessions 13 Sept to 12 Oct.

Families

1. For schools, teachers, students and families with young children as they prepare to reopen in October.
2. Uphold children who have become orphans overnight, having lost one or both of their parents to Covid. Pray for relatives and friends to step up in such a traumatic time.

Orang Asli & Asal

- a) For the indigenous groups to be given assistance with measurable ways to break free from their poverty circles that have existed for centuries. b) For their children to have access to proper education channels and assistance.
- c) For OA who are experiencing enforced dislocation due to various uncontrolled reasons, that they will find good ways to settle themselves to earn enough to provide for their households.

LCM Concerns

1. Pray for healing for the villagers in Kg Pos Woh (Batu 7), Tapah who were tested positive including their Tok Batin who is in serious condition and now hospitalized in Ipoh GH.

Prayer Support

Supporting you in prayer.

Send in your requests via WhatsApp to Rev. Thomas, Adeline or our Council.

CREST Quarantine Centre

For the Crest Quarantine Centre for the B40s and refugees at the Travel Lodge City Centre, Kuala Lumpur. CREST has just been granted permission to operate a Covid stage 1 and 2 quarantine centre this week.

Please pray for:

- Wisdom for the Crest Team as they work with the MOH, CAC and other government authorities.
- Protection and provision for all the medical and non-medical volunteers.

Economy & The Poor

For economic recovery, alleviation of Covid-induced job losses; for employers to be compassionate to their employees; for creation of new avenues of income for those who have lost their jobs.

NECF Malaysia 40 Days Fasting & Prayer



In the light of recent events, NECF is calling for fasting and prayer for 40 days, from 7th Aug to 15th Sept, 2021. Click the icons to download the prayer guides for **Children & Adults** :



“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

2 Chron. 7:14 ESV

KVPF Call Centre (C.A.R.E)

Pray For the KVPF Call Centre (C.A.R.E). This call centre was set up by the churches of the Klang Valley to attend to the needs of the public at large, especially from the marginalised communities in the Klang Valley. Please pray for:

- Wisdom in the management of the call centre as it is entirely managed by volunteers.
- The volunteers for the Lord's guidance as they minister to the fearful, anxious and those in financial and physical needs by phone.

Frontliners

For strength for frontliners, provision to support the healthcare system, and healing of those infected. For the mental well-being and restored hope for the Malaysian society



Lectio 365



Malaysia United
FIREWALL

External Prayer Link

Announcements

BLC Virtual Camp
(5th Sept last registration day)
Thursday
Sept 16th, 2021 (Malaysia Day)
9:45 am to 4:00 pm

Tuesday Bible Study
Tuesdays
8:30 pm weekly

MEM (Men Empowering Men)
Wednesdays
Sept 8th, 22nd, 2021
8:30 pm

Giving Tree
Fridays
Sept 17th, 2021
8:15 pm

Friday Bible Study Group
Fridays
Sept 24th, 2021
8:30 pm

Tithes & Offerings

Account Details

BANGSAR LUTHERAN CHURCH
RHB BANK Acc No.

2142 77 0000 6185

Please specify area of giving in the e-transfer, e.g. Tithe, General Offering, Mission* or Agape Fund.

*The BLC Missions Collections supports the following:

- Batu 20, Orang Asli (OA) Congregation
- United Voice – Moh Foong
- Bible Translation Researchers
- Alongsiders (<http://alongsiders.org>)

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REMINDER



Deadline is TODAY.
Register if you haven't
already!

bangsarlutheran.org/camp2021

THE
FATHER'S
HOUSE
WELCOMES YOU



Bangsar Lutheran Church
No 23 Jalan Abdullah
Bukit Bangsar
59000 Kuala Lumpur
WP.



Contact Info

Pastor

Rev Thomas +60123172632

Administrator

Adeline Lim +60122402811

Weekly
Manna
Sept 5th, 2021 Issue