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Do You Want to Go Away As Well?

⁶⁶ After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. ⁶⁷ So Jesus said to the twelve, *"Do you want to go away as well?"*

⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, *"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life,*

⁶⁹ and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

John 6:56-69 ESV

Today's Question

How might hearing the difference between condemnation and conviction help you face and address your faults?

REFLECTION

Scripture: 1 Kings 8: 1, 6, 10-11, 22-30, 41-43; Psalm 84,

Ephesians 6:10-20,

John 6:56-69

JESUS ASKS QUESTIONS

—Matthew Croasmun, *Let Me Ask You a Question: Conversations with Jesus* (Upper Room Books, 2018).

<https://upperroombooks.com/newevery morning/>

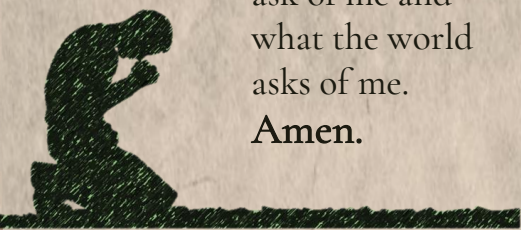
PRAYER of the week

Lord,
help me know the
difference
between what you
ask of me and
what the world
asks of me.
Amen.

Some of the questions Jesus asks cut right to the heart of difficulties in our lives. If we decide to let Jesus ask his questions and we resolve to answer them honestly, we'll be confronted with some ugly truths in our hearts and lives we'd rather not deal with. This is to be expected; any good relationship helps us know ourselves better—including seeing our faults more clearly. When this happens, we must remember to distinguish between the experiences of conviction and condemnation. Though both come from encountering ugly truths about ourselves, conviction often comes from God, but condemnation never comes from God.

“Come to me, all you that are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest.”

—Matthew 11:28





“A JOURNEY TOWARDS THE PASTORAL CALL.”

By Rev. Thomas Low

As we commemorate *Pastor's Sunday* this month, I was asked to write something about what it means to be a pastor. I guess the best place to start is to start at the beginning, when I begin to feel the call of God and being affirmed over and over again.

It started at an early age when I had no idea what the call is. Let me set the context. I was six when my family just moved to a new residential area, *Salak South Garden*. That was 1968. Looking back, I believe it was truly the grace of God because not too long after, on May 13th 1969, among the highest casualty of this infamous riot was in the very village I used to live. If my family had not moved just a few months before, I might not be around to write this piece.

A few months later, most unexpectedly, my new next-door neighbor turned out to be the family of a Lutheran pastor from Hong Kong, assigned to plant a church from their home. Being from a Chinese family, my parents sent me over for Sunday School for a simple purpose of improving my English. But God had other plans.

“I remember that I was around ten when I suddenly felt strongly that I wanted to be a pastor..”



With pastoral staffs of the Gunzenhausen Town Church..



Pastor Thomas performing baptism in BLC.

I've held the pastor, Rev. John Wong, in high regards since my Sunday School days and I remember that I was around ten when I suddenly felt strongly that I wanted to be a pastor. At that point I've no idea what is a calling or what it means to be a pastor. That deep conviction was unlike those that a child changed every year according to his fancies. It stayed on with me quietly and grew steadily as the years pass.

The first thing that God did was to my mind. He instilled in me a very unusual passion and joy in the Bible. I love Sunday School, listening to the *Old Testament* stories. I don't have a bible, so I saved up to buy those small booklets of individual gospels. Cost me 50 sen each, so it was RM2 for the 4 gospels, back then my daily allowance was 10 sen. This passion for the Word propels me to attend any and all bible studies I can find in the church. In my teenage years I took on a thematic study of the Old and New Testament known as the *Bethel Bible Series* and my teacher then was Bro. Erik Lai. He was an excellent teacher, clear, concise and knowledgeable.

All through my student days, from my 'A' Levels to the ICSEA, I begin to lose interest in my studies and find more joy in reading the Bible, Christian doctrines and theology, comparative religions and philosophy. I realized I was just marking time, just waiting for God to give me the green light to enter seminary.

During those formative years as a teenager, God did another work within me. This time, he dealt with my heart. Just like all teenagers, I went through that phase of loneliness and self-pity. That I am alone and no one cares. God snapped me out of that phase of unsightly obsessive self-preoccupation by bringing me to a realization that, *"I cannot be the only one feeling so alone and isolated, waiting for someone to care and affirm me. If that is the case, then I should go and care and affirm these individuals instead of sitting here feeling sorry for myself and hoping someone will come along."* That was more or less like an epiphany of what it means to,

I graduated from seminary in 1987, more than three decades has passed, the passion for the Word and care for souls have remained a constant. It has grown and mellowed over the years even as I experienced much joy and contentment in the ministry of the Lord.



THE
PASTORAL'S
CHAIR

, “there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.”

(Jer. 20.9)



Pastor Thomas and family!



Pastor Thomas & the BLC family!

What began as desire became a compulsion. Just as Jeremiah, when he was told not to preach, said, “*there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.*” (Jer. 20.9) Preaching and teaching the Word is not so much an obligation as a pastor but a compulsion, “I have to and I need to!”

My son has asked me countless times, “Why can’t I be a businessman instead of a pastor?” Of course, his motivation was that I could then afford to buy him more Roblox game money and he can have a bigger room with his computers! I’ve never asked myself that question before because it never occur to me.

This reminds me of that moment in Jesus’ ministry when many of his followers were leaving him, he turned to his disciples and asked them if they too will soon leave. Simon Peter answered him, “*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life,*” (John 6.68). To paraphrased it, Peter was saying, “*Where else can we go? We have nowhere else to go!*”

I felt the same way when my son asked me that question. I can’t imagine not being a pastor, not being in full-time ministry. Being a pastor is not so much what I do but who I am – servant of God, called by God to preach and teach His Word. My calling is not a calling into a role but a calling into being.

Being your pastor here and now is not what I do but who I am. The greatest joy I have is when you allow me to share with you the *Word of God*. It is when you invite me into your life and allow me the honour to journey with you in your faith. This year and a half have been strange times but it is also a joy to be your pastor in such unusual circumstances.

So, coming back to the question, “*What does it mean to me a pastor?*” It means a life of joy and contentment of knowing the Word, sharing the Word and sharing lives in Community and knowing that there is no other work I rather do that means so much for eternity.



But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Jeremiah 29:7 ESV

Afghanistan
Pray for the situation in Afghanistan including missionaries and workers still in-country.



Nation

- Pray for the newly elected PM and new government administration that we may have clearly designated, righteous and competent leaders to run the country in this time critical time.
- Pray for good communication and coordination among all the Cabinet ministers, that the entire executive team will be strengthened with solid brainstorming and a valuable and effective combination of expertise.



Church

- For the Church to continue to be relevant and practical in helping those in need (Matthew 5:14-16).
- For God's protection for the nation and an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. For fresh courage to move on as we continue to fully trust the Lord.
- Pray for the Crest Quarantine Centre and the C.A.R.E Lifeline Call Centre which is the response of the churches to the pandemic.

Pandemic

- For the safety of the people and protection against new and highly infectious variants.
- For wisdom for authorities in this National Recovery Phase (NRP).
- Pray for the reform of the healthcare system; proper compensation for workers, and healing for the sick and infected.

Economy

For economic recovery and 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.

Prayer Support

Supporting you in prayer.

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

Families, Educators

For schools, teachers, students and families with young children at home, as schools prepare to reopen in October.



Lectio 365



Malaysia United
FIREWALL



External Prayer Link

Announcements

WEW (Speak with Sheh-Ren)

Saturday
Aug 28th, 2021
3:00 pm

Tuesday Bible Study

Tuesdays
8:30 pm weekly

MEM (Men Empowering Men)

Wednesdays
Aug 25th, 2021
8:30 pm

Giving Tree

Fridays
Sept 3rd, 2021
8:15 pm

Friday Bible Study Group

Fridays
Aug 27th, 2021
8:30 pm
Study on Songs of Songs

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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Virtual

Bangsar Lutheran



CHURCH CAMP

September 16, 2021 | 10am - 4pm

BANGSAR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Virtual Camp Itinerary

9:45- 10:00 AM	Admission
10:00-10:15AM	Welcome
10:15-10:45 AM	Ice-breaking Session 1
10:45-11:15 AM	Worship session by JaXian
11:15-11:25 AM	Devotion by Pastor Thomas
11:30-12:30 PM	Breakout Rooms: Life Sharing
12:30-1:30 PM	Lunch
1:30-1:45 PM	Ice-breaking Session 2
1:45-2:15 PM	Speaker: Pastor Siew Woh
2:15-3:30 PM	Breakout Rooms: Discuss
3:30-4:00 PM	Closing: Reflect, Response, Photo Session

Register now!



Registration closes on
September 5, 2021



visit bangsarlutheran.org for
more info

THE FATHER'S HOUSE WELCOMES YOU



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**Weekly
Manna**
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