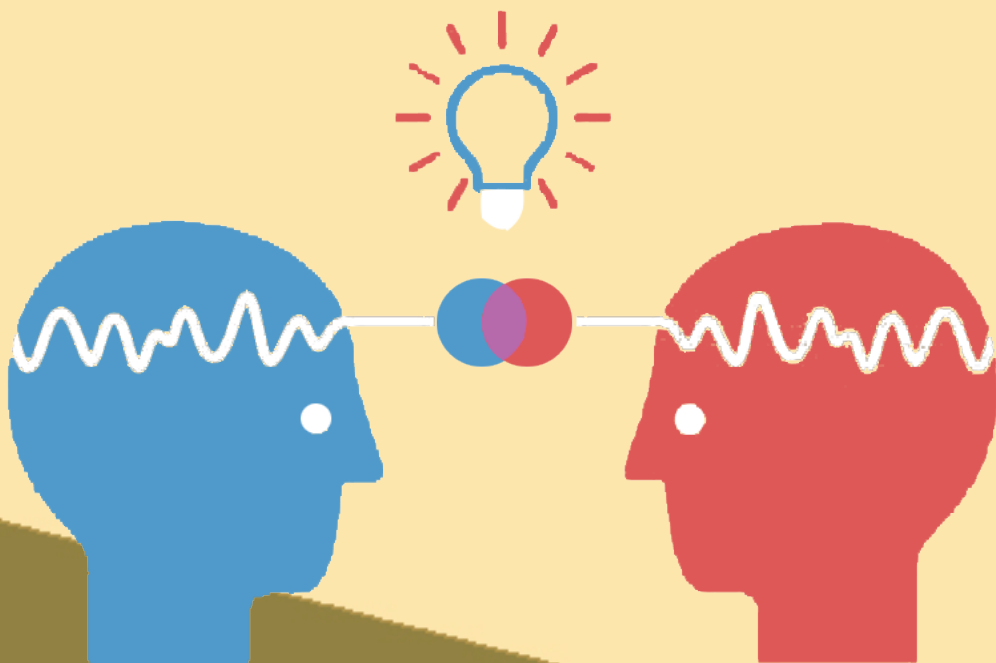


EXCELLENT INFLUENCE



**15
NOVEMBER
2020**

ED.LXLI.11.2020

Bethany International Church
THE HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS

FOUNDING PASTOR

Rev Niko Njotoraharjo

SENIOR PASTOR

Ps Djohan Handojo

PASTOR

Ps Daniel Prajogo

Associate Pastor

Ps Unggul Santika
Ps Iwan Adinugroho

Next Generation Pastor

Ps Rudy Nurtanaya

Pastoral Care

Ps Lily Karto

Prophetic, Praise & Worship Pastor

Ps Hemah Demak Panjaitan
Ps Suzana Tahir

Teaching Pastor

Ps Daniel Hardjosuwito

Mission & Evangelism Pastor

Ps Gideon Gunawan

Office Manager

Ps Suzana Tahir

CONTACT US



Bethany International Church



@bicmelbourne



office@bethanymelb.org.au



www.bethanymelb.org.au



+61396999077

Foreword

It's been a tough period for some, if not all of us. A 15-week lockdown has undoubtedly impacted our hearts and minds, even maybe our souls. We do not want to deny that. When I was thinking about this month's topic (excellent influence), it seems extremely hard for us to be an excellent influence for others. Some of us are drowning. We are struggling to cope with our baggage, let alone being an excellent influence for others.

Nevertheless, I was reminded of Jesus' prayer to Simon Peter, who responded with boasting about his faithfulness (Luke 22:31-32). Still in the same chapter, only a few verses away, we know that he denied Jesus three times. We could not imagine the pain and the hardship he went through. But God kept His promise, He took hold of his faith. The rest is history, we all know that Peter became one of the most influential figures in early church history.

Luke 22:31-32

"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

What's interesting in Jesus' prayer is not only that He gives assurance of our faith, but He also enables us to strengthen our brothers. So dear brothers and sisters, God is able to use us to be an excellent influence, even through our failures. We will not become like Peter, but we can learn that it is through our weaknesses that God's power is made perfect. And when we are restored by His Spirit, let us encourage our brothers, serve one another, be the salt and the light, and live out our identity in Christ.

In this November edition, we will cover a range of different topics during the five weeks span. We will discuss how students should face the exam period, how lockdown has changed (some of) us, and how Christ enables us to have an excellent influence on our surroundings. And finally, we will close our November edition with hopeful anticipation towards the celebration of the birth of our Saviour, Christ Jesus.

Our hope is that you may be encouraged during this tough period, especially if you are a student or if you are experiencing hardship. We want to encourage you to consider what Christ has done for you, and believe His grace and power that is available to us as His children.

HELLO *new comers!*

Welcome to Bethany International Church Melbourne.
So glad that you are here with us. We want to help make your
first experience at BIC Melbourne a great one!



GET CONNECTED

Christian journey shouldn't be alone because it is a community project. Join our Community of Love (COOL) every Friday 7PM!

LET US CONTACT YOU



Lastly, please enjoy a cup of coffee on us! 



COOL LIST



MAIN

Canaan	Kezia, Freddie
Ephratah	Steven, Henry
Berea - Bethesda	Romy
Bethlehem	Felix, Fransisca
Jordan	Sony, Wilfred
Horeb	Ferry, Febria
Bethany	Paulus, Erina
Bethel	Christy, Elvina
Cana	Bobby
Philadelphia - Pniel	Dwi, Vero
Moriah	Elve, Calista
Ephraim	Kevin L, Sonia
Ekklesia	Edo, Ica
Emmaus	Fabian, Priska
Galilee	Kevin Y, Corine
Gennesaret	Reinetta, Albert
Gilgal - Carmel	Erika, Mike
Hebron - Philippi	Yoseph, Rian
Zion	Monica, Raymond
Eden	Jennifer

FAMILY

Antioch	Andy, Iwan
Tiberias	Andre, Albert
Gethsemane	Michael, Rudy
Jerusalem	Hestu
Mt Hermon	Lily, Unggul
Phillipi	Hariyanto, Ivan
Shekinah	Alice
Tabernacle	Sandi
Westal	Michael

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Macedonia	Eric, Alicia
Shiloh	Daniel, Clarissa

NEXT GEN

Judea	Valentina, Sylvio
Judah	Aldo, Kezia M.
Israel	Catherine, Jerry
Jeremiah	Sinta, Kevin W.
Heaven	Pauline



Sunday school ministry: How it influences my spiritual life

BY THALIA RIYADI



I would like to introduce myself first as most people might not know me. I am Thalia, and have been a part of BIC since July 2014.

I started to observe Sunday School around mid 2015 as one of my COOL members asked me to join. It took me a year and a half to make a decision and finally in November 2016, I filled in and submitted the yellow form as a symbolic commitment that I want to fully commit myself to this ministry. At first, the reason why I joined this ministry is because I love kids. However, as the day went by, the Holy Spirit reminded me that the main reason why He gives me such a big passion in kids, is because I first encountered God when I was six years old.

Let me share about my first encounter, it was my 6th birthday (it was on 29th September 2002) when a preacher gave me a Bible story book which I finished it within less than a month. As I read the stories about Good News and a bunch of stories from that Book, my faith eventually grew, as written in Romans 10:17, "So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ". Approximately seven months after that, on Friday 18th April 2002, to be exact, I

encountered God inside my bedroom. It was only me and Him. Somehow in my mind, I was so amazed how someone could be so kind to save me from all of my sins. Why, why and why, I could not even find any reasons why and even until now I can't get any answer other than because He loves me that much. Hence, I can say that the main reason why I joined this ministry is because I encountered God when I was still a kid, which is proof that there is no limitation for the Holy Spirit to work, no matter how young a person is. On top of that, the other reason why I love kids so much because I can sense their purity, curiosity and enthusiasm in life, in which I also learn these traits from them.

Sunday school influences the spiritual growth of the kids

I have been going to Sunday school since I was three years old. From my experience as a Sunday school kid, there is a bunch of Bible knowledge that I obtained from Sunday school, such as the story of Mary and Joseph, Gideon, Moses, how amazing He is, and how smart He is. Growing up, whenever life is not as smooth as I expected, God has always reminded me through those stories which I've learnt from Sunday school, that there is

nothing impossible. Moreover, whenever I serve in Sunday School, I always think of it as a long-term investment. Perhaps, the impacts can't be seen right in this season when the kids are still very young, however I'm absolutely sure every seeds that have been sown are not going to be in vain as I am actually the evidence of that seeds that have been sown by my Sunday school teacher back then.

Becoming a godly influence for the kids

I believe the godly influence I have given actually comes from God Himself. I always pray on my own time to ask for His wisdom in my ministry, therefore, I acknowledge any influence that I have given to the kids is actually coming from Him. I am just a vessel that God used. God has used me as a vessel by giving me creativity in doing the ministry, or to give answers to the questions from the kids that can be simply understood. There are just a lot of stories that I can share about how I have seen the kids experience God through Sunday School ministry. But these two are always my favourite ones.

It was during Easter of 2018. We were celebrating Easter, when one boy suddenly became teary seeing the symbol

of a cross on a piece of paper. Seeing that, I became teary as well when I saw it, because it made me ponder and question myself, "When was the last time I felt that amazement of the cross?".

The other one was when a boy (let's call him A) kicked a ball and somehow unintentionally hit another boy (call him B). Boy A cried afterwards and didn't want to talk. I sensed there was just a deep condemnation that he was currently experiencing that time. So, by the wisdom of God, I wrote a couple sentences for him on a piece of paper: "Therefore, there is no condemnation [for those who are] in Jesus Christ (Romans 8:1). We all make mistakes, it's okay. God has forgiven you, so forgive yourself." Afterwards, the boy started to act normal again.

As I went home, I really pondered about how many times we became that boy, we felt an intense condemnation of our sins, and forget the truth that God has forgiven us? Why should we feel condemned? When He said it is finished, it is really finished (John 19:30). The Greek word translated "it is finished" is *tetelestai*, which is an accounting term meaning "paid in full". I pondered and questioned myself, "Have I really known fully that my

past sins, my current sins and my future sins have been fully paid by Him on the cross?"

Overall, I have learnt a lot of things from this Sunday school ministry: How to speak up with authority among the kids, how to depend on God's grace and wisdom to answer their questions, how to approach each kid personally with love, how to do ministry efficiently and effectively with different type of ministers with different personalities as a body of Christ. Last but not least, the most important part is that every time I prepare the sharing, or activities, I am actually the one that was being blessed first by the message that the Holy Spirit speaks to me through those materials.

Excellent influence

For me Sunday school is not the only box of ministry that I want to give an excellent influence on. I want my whole life, every second of my life to be an excellent influence. I want to use my skills, my personality, my words to influence people with the best that I can give. Oxford dictionary defines the word excellent itself as "extremely good". Such simple words, yet somehow, we often don't do

it quite well. For me personally, the word excellent means I do everything with the best that I can do, whatever it is, whenever and wherever I am, no matter whether someone sees it or not. As Anne Graham Lotz said, we live only for One Audience that is God Himself. It doesn't mean my excellence is perfect, but my excellence is different with other people's excellence. My excellence will keep improving as time goes as I keep learning from other people, my mistakes, and other people's mistakes. Let us learn to keep giving our excellence back to Him as He firstly has already given His excellence, His Son to us.

***I do everything with the best
that I can do, whatever it is,
whenever and wherever I am, no
matter whether someone sees it
or not***



WEEKLY DEVOTION

15 NOVEMBER

Wahyu 5 - 9

Ayat Renungan:
Wahyu 7 : 12

“sambil berkata:
“Amin! puji-pujian
dan kemuliaan,
dan hikmat dan
syukur, dan
hormat dan
kekuasaan dan
kekuatan bagi
Allah kita sampai
selama-lamanya!
Amin!””

16 NOVEMBER

Wahyu 10 - 12

Ayat Renungan:
Wahyu 12 : 11

“Dan mereka
mengalahkan
dia oleh darah
Anak Domba, dan
oleh perkataan
kesaksian
mereka. Karena
mereka tidak
mengasihi nyawa
mereka sampai
ke dalam maut.”

17 NOVEMBER

Wahyu 13 - 15

Ayat Renungan:
Wahyu 14 : 7

“dan ia berseru
dengan suara
nyaring: “Takutlah
akan Allah dan
muliakanlah
Dia, karena
telah tiba saat
penghakiman-Nya,
dan sembahlah
Dia yang telah
menjadikan langit
dan bumi dan laut
dan semua mata
air.””

18 NOVEMBER

Wahyu 16 - 18

Ayat Renungan:
Wahyu 3 : 20

“Lihat, Aku berdiri
di muka pintu
dan mengetok;
jikalau ada orang
yang mendengar
suara-Ku dan
membukakan
pintu, Aku
akan masuk
mendapatkannya
dan Aku makan
bersama-sama
dengan dia, dan
ia bersama-sama
dengan Aku.”

19 NOVEMBER

Wahyu 19 - 22

Ayat Renungan:
Wahyu 19 : 5

“Maka kedengaranlah suatu suara dari takhta itu: “Pujilah Allah kita, hai kamu semua hamba-Nya, kamu yang takut akan Dia, baik kecil maupun besar!””

20 NOVEMBER

Yehezkiel 1 - 4

Ayat Renungan:
Yehezkiel 3 : 18

“Kalau Aku berfirman kepada orang jahat: Engkau pasti dihukum mati! --dan engkau tidak memperingatkan dia atau tidak berkata apa-apa untuk memperingatkan orang jahat itu dari hidupnya yang jahat, supaya ia tetap hidup, orang jahat itu akan mati dalam kesalahannya, tetapi Aku akan menuntut pertanggungjawaban atas nyawanya dari padamu.”

21 NOVEMBER

Yehezkiel 5 - 8

Ayat Renungan:
Yehezkiel 12 : 25

“sebab Aku, TUHAN, akan berfirman dan apa yang Kufirmankan akan terjadi, dan firman itu tidak akan ditunda-tunda lagi, sebab pada masa hidupmu, hai kaum pemberontak, Aku akan mengucapkan suatu firman dan Aku akan menggenapinya, demikianlah firman Tuhan ALLAH.””

Diary of single Christians: Pressure and trust

BY JENNIFER CHANDRA

Being a single female of early thirties comes with perks and pressure of its own. A bag of life experiences in your hand makes you wiser, but also scarier at the same time. You might not be as innocent when you had puppy love and you know the love story of happily ever after is only an image that was successfully sold by Hollywood. Marriage requires commitment and hard work. As God is really interested in marriage, we should be careful about it too.

These days you might receive a lot of baby shower invitations or your nephew/niece's birthday party invitation. Even a bachelorette party seems distant in the past. You might not hear your friend rushing you to get married but the social pressure is there. Especially if you are the one who tells yourself that you will get married when you are 25. Approaching your milestone or even passing your own benchmark feels like a failure in life. Maybe you asked yourself "What's wrong with me? Am I too picky?"

I interviewed several women of God who have gone through similar experiences like me. These women waited until God gave an imperfect perfect guy for them just right on time.

Before we continue on this topic, I'd like to apologise in advance to all male readers out there that this article is largely skewed to a girl's point of view. However, you can get a good insight on how a woman's mind works in this particular topic and I hope you can get something out of it.

There are a lot of books out there talking about what to do or not to do when you are waiting for Mr. Right. This article is not an instructive article but more of a life-sharing testimony and I pray this gives you hope and strength to be patient, a reminder of the love of Christ that is so sweet in any stage of life. May this writing encourage you to wait a little longer and find that our Lord Jesus cares for all aspects and every little detail of our relationship aspiration.

Pressure, pressure, pressure

Family pressure, social pressure and biological pressure. Seems that unending pressure comes from every angle. Imagine you are at your family Chinese New Year party. Seems all aunties and unknown old relatives are nagging why you haven't got married yet. Usually we can manage this topic when we are talking to our parents or close friends. We can be as open

and not really care much with being impolite. Or maybe this scenario is familiar to you that you are in a church where everybody knows who you are and being widely known for your singleness. People try to hook you up with someone and introduce a stranger to you. It can be overwhelming at times but I guess we should take it in a positive manner. Consider it is a natural question and people genuinely concern about us. To all love cupid out there, thank you! We are grateful that we can meet new people and make friends. However please do not put more burden in this high pressure Eastern culture society where women ought to have a husband to be completed and to be welcomed in society.

If the outwardly pressures are the reasons we come into marriage, surely sooner or later the relationship will crumble. We are the one who is getting married. No one will bear the consequences but ourselves. Eventually, it creates more problems rather than solving our singleness dilemma.

Criteria, criteria, criteria

Pressure can be harmful when it translates into compromise. We should have an absolute standard of what matters most. As we know light and darkness cannot be united and faith should be the number one utmost criteria. Otherwise, our godly principle can be a joke and we cannot share our deepest level just simply because our spouse doesn't understand. It is



**Do not be
scared to
fight for
what we
consider
as
important
criteria
because
God also
cares with
that too.**

hard to resist a kind hearted man and even it's harder if he has sweet tongue. Furthermore, you might be a FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) of a good guy. Since the pool of eligible bachelors is getting smaller, you just go with whoever comes in a way. Maybe he shares similar faith in Jesus but you clearly realise that your visions are different. We better ask ourselves carefully and answer honestly. Do we want to share our lifetime with a person with the opposite life direction? Eventually, it will create division in the relationship.

Some of us might have a long list of criteria of the Mr. Right. Do not be scared to fight for what we consider as important criteria because God also cares with that too. For example, you want someone who you can minister with, someone who has a similar love language like you, who has a heart for people and has a high act of service. Or you felt financial stability is important for you then tell God about it too. Do not feel judged by so called 'worldly' criteria. One of the interviewees shared that God amazingly fulfilled this criteria by giving her boyfriend-then, husband-now a huge salary increase to show that God is able and He truly cares.

Pray, pray, pray

Marriage is a crucial decision. It affects us and generations to come. Therefore, it is important for us to pray and fervently pray. Some people might ask for a sign or maybe you receive a prophecy of your future spouse. 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 says, "Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what

is good." This verse is self-explanatory and the Word of God is the only source that we can trust 100%. Servant of God can be inaccurate and our interpretation can be misleading. Do not be deceived or blindsided. Seek conviction over a mere sentiment.

Epilogue

There is nothing wrong with being single and independent. We are equally loved by God; both single and married people. We should pursue our wholeness and be satisfied when we are single, otherwise we will expect other people to fill our emptiness and marriage is only a vehicle to selfishly fulfill our own desires. We should realise that God is the only one who can satisfy and complete us.

The mystery of timing will be forever hidden until your story is revealed. We will be processed until we are ready for the purpose that God has set for all of us. Joseph was not ready when he boasted his dreams in front of his brothers. He was appointed as the Egypt prime minister after he went through the whole process. Every person has their own stories. How it starts and how it ends will be different for all people. But rest assured that God's providence is interlacing beautifully in our life.

For it is written, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).



MINISTRY LIST

VOCAL



Jessica Sutiono

MUSICIAN



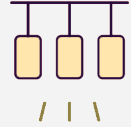
Raynaldo Ali

MULTIMEDIA



Budi Sendjaja

LIGHTING



Budi Sendjaja

SOUND



Steven Santika

USHER



Elbert Pranoto

TRANSLATOR



Elbert Pranoto

CARING



Felix Hariyadi

DANCER



Priska Sunaryo

DRAMA



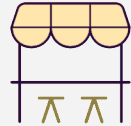
Jennifer Chandra

SUNDAY SCHOOL



Reinetta Tanujaya

HOSPITALITY



Tasmin Ifah

INTERCESSOR



Monica Haryanto

MISSION



Felix Chietra

MEDIA ART



Sonia Pranatha

COMMUNITY KITCHEN



Yolanda Tjong

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms"

PODCAST



Ravello Satria

YOUTH



Rio Susanto

**We invite you to join our
online service every Sunday
from 8.30 am onwards**

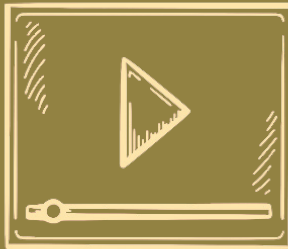
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Bethany International Church Melbourne



**Let's celebrate the Lord's Day
together!**