



Discipleship TRAINING CENTRE

Newsletter

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Confronting Your Moriah

(GENESIS 22:1-14, HEBREWS 11:17-19)

by Rev. Song Cheng Hock



46th Thanksgiving & Valedictory Service at Bartley Christian Church.

Idolatry is a subtle distraction. It often takes the form of trusting in the wonderful things we've created or nurtured, and pushing us to put our confidence in them.

However well-intentioned, our ministry can become our idol. An idol is anything or person that displaces God as Lord, including good and legitimate matters like our family, our ministry, and those things that make us feel significant, successful and secure.

We know we've created an idol when the loss of these precious attachments creates a disproportionate reaction in us. It's natural to feel pain in any form of losses. But when that feeling threatens to impair our faith in God, you can be sure that the item has become an idol.

God doesn't want us to fall into that trap. So He may test us as He did to Abraham at Mount Moriah. Abraham had to sacrifice his one and only son, Isaac, the child of promise; the son for whom he and his wife had waited for 25 years.

This raises the issue of God's character. "How could a loving God ask Abraham to do that?" It runs contrary to our image and expectations

of God. But the issue is not about the God you want to believe in but rather God as He truly is.

Our reverence for the divine must allow us to appreciate mysteries. We don't have to understand or know everything. Mysteries can mean this: our journey is ever evolving. God's purposes are still unfolding in our lives. We must believe that, even when we don't understand.

To lose a child to some unforeseen circumstance is already a terrible tragedy. To cause it is unthinkable. But Abraham was prepared to do it. Reason? He trusted God. Hebrews 11:19 gives us the basis of his faith: "Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death."

He reasoned that since God promised him a line of descendants, God would somehow honour that. Deep within, Abraham knew that somehow, some way, God was going to work things out so that Isaac would live. When he saw Moriah in the distance, he gave this instruction to his servants: "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there.

We will worship and then we will come back to you" (Genesis 22:5).

Notice, he said "We," not "I" will come back to you. He was confident that both of them would somehow return together—which they did.

How will you decide when you have to face your Mount Moriah where you are asked to sacrifice your treasured gifts? How would you choose? To choose commits us to a certain path, a path that says something about us, our values, morality, integrity and priorities.

Abraham had to come to the place where he willingly gave back to God what was always God's in the first place. We can learn two lessons from this episode:

First, we're to hold whatever God gives with open hands.

Whatever we have comes from God. But when it enslaves us, our Moriah calls us to let go. When God's gifts stand between Him and us, we must exercise the courage to release.

The word "tested" in Hebrews 11:17 and the word "tempted" in the book of James come from the same Greek word "peirazo." The meaning therefore depends on the context. God tests us and every testing is potentially a temptation if we yield to our base yearnings.

If we sin under testing, we cannot blame God, because He always provides the way of escape. His purpose in the testing is to prove and purify our faith and to develop



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46th Thanksgiving & Valedictory Service

Bartley Christian Church, 14 May 2015

Excerpts from Leaving Students' Testimonies

Anucha Khobpee (Thailand)

I would like to share some lessons I learnt at DTC through three objects.

This McDonald's cup reminds me how I learnt to be a disciple from my lecturers. They showed me how to serve. They know the Bible and live out what it teaches. They have helped me to read it carefully which makes me more excited to keep studying the Bible.

The second is this StarHub top-up card. This belongs to my first roommate whose father passed away three weeks into the new term. This card reminds me of the friendships I formed at DTC. The senior students helped me to feel at home. They loved and accepted me even though we come from different countries, cultures and all spoke our own versions of English.

The last object is this diploma that I received a moment ago. It shows me that I am able, by God's grace, to fulfil all the requirements at DTC in English. It reminds me also of the help from so many of my friends who assisted me with my English, who prayed for me and encouraged me, and who supported me financially.

San Sochenda (Cambodia)

The two years at DTC are special to me. I learnt to slow down, to reflect on my past journey to better understand myself, my own needs and what I need to learn and even 'unlearn' to be better prepared to face the future in life and in ministry.

Before coming to DTC, my understanding about Missions was rather narrow and shallow. I used to think that Missions was all about winning souls for Christ and saving people from eternal damnation based on Matthew 28:18-20.

Eventually I learnt that humans are not just disembodied souls waiting to be saved! Humans are integrated beings that need holistic care and nurture. Missions is more than Evangelism and Discipleship. It is about fulfilling God's plan to redeem humans and restore the whole creation broken by sin and evil, through the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

I learnt also that discipleship does not just take place in the classroom or at mentoring sessions, but throughout the day, and in all circumstances of life. Discipleship is a way of life. It is the co-journeying of extra miles with another person.

Loida Domingo (Philippines)

At DTC I learned to reflect and write on my experience- something which my co-workers in the field encouraged me to do but did not have the motivation to do it. DTC "forced" me to really write. For two years I have been writing not just stories but academic papers! The process of writing enabled me to reflect on what God has done and is doing in my life. It led me to pray for people and situation, to seek Him and know Him deeper in my life.

Another thing that greatly impacted me during my studies is relationships. At DTC friendships were established through common passion for, and calling from, God and prayers. We shared our stories and struggles. Amazingly our lecturers became friends and fellow pilgrims too.

These friendships went beyond DTC to OMF, Moriah BP Church and other churches. My friendships with them have broadened my perspective on relationship and the mission of God in this world. It has also opened doors for partnerships in the ministry.

Raiya Beth (Cambodia)

My two years of study at DTC can be summarized with this verse: "My Grace is



From left - Loida, Anucha, Raiya & Chenda

Sufficient for You!" I do not deserve anything from the Lord but he showed his grace to me. He called me to ministry and brought me to DTC. So that I may know him and learn how to serve and love one another.

More than the knowledge I gained from my studies, I have learnt more from DTC's cross-cultural community living. This experience helped me to know myself and build my character. I learnt also to be part of a community and maintain family unity. I thank God that he has given me this opportunity to learn and grow.

I also learnt a lot from my lecturers. They are not only our lecturers, they are also like our parents. They care about our spiritual needs as well as our physical needs. They actually have done more than what they are supposed to do. They impacted me not only with their teaching but also with their being.



Prayer time for leaving students.

Introducing Our New Students

Berman was a staff of PERKANTAS (IFES Indonesia) in Malang from 2007 to 2015 before coming to DTC. Although he was introduced to Christianity while still young, it was in university that he gave fully his life to Christ. He came to DTC upon the recommendation of his senior staff to "study theology in order to build a good foundation of Christian faith and biblical worldview... and to develop my spirituality and cross-cultural ministry."



Sukumarn (Nan for short) grew up and studied in Chiang Mai, Thailand. "I was born in a Christian family. I prayed for conversion while I was still young but did not really understand the gospel. What drove me to pray was fear of hell. When I went to university, I joined Thai Christian Students (IFES Thailand) and it was there that I understood the gospel and prayed to God again to receive the gift of His Son." After



university Nan worked as staffworker of TCS for six years. Prior to coming to DTC she worked as a receptionist at a hostel in Chiang Mai for one year. Nan hopes "to be trained as Jesus' disciple... and learn more deeply God's word as it bears on issues Thai students and graduates face."

Jenni gained a heart for missions with focus on Afghanistan, China and Tibet when she became a Christian in junior high school. But it would take several years and detours later for this vision to be realized. After undergraduate studies in Jogjakarta, Indonesia, she went to Spain for graduate studies. It was in Spain that her desire for missions was rekindled. She came home in 2014 and worked as a temporary staff of OMF Indonesia. Friends encouraged her to pursue her dream of becoming a missionary. She then applied for the GDIS programme of DTC. "I pray that during my time at DTC I can learn...to be more like Christ, each and every day of my life; have a heart of a servant and a mind of a scholar and an ear ready to listen."



L to R Sukumarn, Berman, Jenni



The DTC Community 2015-16

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perseverance (James 1:2-3). Without testing, we don't know how far we can stretch.

The second lesson is to hold on to God whatever the circumstances.

Nothing can alter His character. He can never become less truthful, less faithful or less loving. His ways may not be the most convenient way but that doesn't mean that that's not the best way.

The Lord's best way is paved with one special intention – to free us from our encumbrances and to produce His Son's image in us. We must not miss those teachable moments that He appoints for us.

God should be more valuable to us than even the most precious gifts that He has given us. To get rid of our idols, we must be prepared to name them. Only then can we surrender them to God and invite Him to resume His rightful place.

Once that exchange has taken place, those treasured possessions, accomplishments and people will be seen through His loving perspective and taken as grace gifts.

Do not forget the paradoxical principle of spirituality—there is much to gain from losing, and much to lose from gaining. Do not be afraid of confronting your Mount Moriah!

This is an abbreviated version of the message Pastor Song of Amazing Grace Presbyterian Church shared during Valedictory 2015.



The DTC Community at Valedictory Service.



DTC Singapore alumni Batch 87-92 Reunion hosted by Timothy and Magdalena Chong on 8 Aug 2015

Praise God and Thank You



**1. DTC Van's
renewal of COE
(S\$50,000)
- provided!**

**2. General
Fund Deficit
- reversed!**



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two bedrooms
in one Faculty flat
- S\$4,000***



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