



WINDOW TO BGST NEWSLETTER

APR 2020



A SILENCE AND SOLITUDE WITH GOD FOR GOD'S SAKE

BY MS SEAH CHIEW KWAN

“Why for ‘God’s Sake’?” Someone asked when I told her about the retreat.

Often times we think that it is for our own sake that we should quieten down and spend time in silence and solitude with God so that we may hear from Him and know what He wants us to do. What if silence and solitude with God is more than that? What if it is for God’s sake, because He created us in love and deeply desires that we get away to be alone with him in order that we might simply enjoy the love that exists within the Trinity from all eternity?

Donald Fairbairn¹ suggests that all of Christian life is directly related to the central relationship that is shared among Father, Son and Spirit that has existed from all eternity. We Christians are meant to live in a way that somehow participates in God’s own life. This participation in divine life means sharing in the life of the Trinity, a trinitarian relationship that Scripture

particularly expresses when it speaks of the Father’s love for his Son.

I have had opportunities to witness how God draws his people to share in the life of the Trinity in my time with my Christian clients. In one such session with a Christian client struggling with life, faith and depression for many years, God encountered the person in an unexpected way:

“Totally flipped my mind. Thought I should be having a *woe-is-me* moment but what I felt was like, please come closer and find out what is this fragrance that is filling the room, what is the material of His cloak that I just caught a glimpse of. Can I touch it? Can I smell it?... I felt like I would like to touch just a teeny weeny corner of his garment to feel what it was like... it was a drawing experience in the awe moment. He attracts.”

Who is this God who desires us and actually attracts His created being in such a captivating manner? Do I know Him? *"And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent"* (John 17:3; ESV).

Perhaps the spiritual discipline of silence and solitude is God's invitation to us, the beloved in Christ, to participate in the love fellowship among God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit and be privy to the on-going conversation that is happening in the divine realm. We might want to see silence and solitude as an invitation to pause and experience the love that Jesus loves us, the way the Father loves Him and to remain in the divine love, [*"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love."* (John 15:9; NIV)]. As we remain in His love, we might hear, as Jesus' friend, what He has heard from the Father and is making known to us [*"but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you"* (John 15:15b; ESV)] so that our heart's desire is aligned with God's desire.

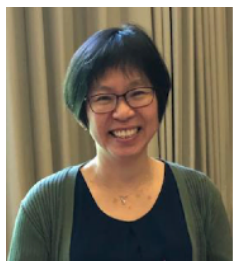
In my response to the person who asked *"Why for 'God's sake'?"*, I shared that it was because God's longing for us to participate in the love relationship that exists among the three

persons of the Trinity is very intense. I have come to realize that if one can experience God's love in the heart instead of merely knowing about God's love in the head, this experiential knowing can result in one being so filled with God's love that this love simply flows into loving self and others the way God loves. Perhaps it is this longing that leads to God creating man and woman in His image and likeness in the first place.

One needs a radical abiding in God's love to experience a moment to moment awareness in normal daily living that we are loved. In this season of uncertainty, I wonder what it would look like for Christians to practise radical abiding in Christ's love, to experience moment-to-moment awareness that one is in Christ's perfect love and in the process, to experience in life's situation that God's perfect love casts out all fear.

Do you sense God's loving invitation to enter into a time of silence and solitude with Him *for His sake* simply because He desires that we can rest in His peace especially in this time of uncertainty and fear?

¹ Donald Fairbairn, *Life in the Trinity* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2009), 10-12.



Ms Seah Chiew Kwan is a graduate from BGST (Grad Dip CS, MCS) and TCA College (MA Counselling). Currently, she is an adjunct lecturer with BGST and Tung Ling Bible School. Since 2010 Chiew Kwan has been facilitating Silence & Solitude retreats and workshops for church and small groups. She offers professional counselling to individuals as a private practitioner as well as spiritual mentoring for Christian individuals. Her interest is integrating counselling and Christian spirituality in her work and ministry. She was a lecturer with Singapore Polytechnic for 20 years. Prior to that she was with the Defense Science Organisation for 4½ years. She is married with two adult children. She is also a cancer survivor.

Ms Seah Chiew Kwan will be the facilitating a 1-day Spiritual Retreat: A Silence and Solitude with God for God's sake on 30th May 2020.

More details at <https://bgst.edu.sg/events/details/206>

SOFT LAUNCH OF



CENTRE FOR DISABILITY MINISTRY IN ASIA

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN KIN AND BGST

BGST's vision is "that **all Christians** grow in Christ-likeness and live out their calling to fulfil God's creative and redemptive purposes in the Church and the marketplace." This biblically mandated aspiration must include people with disabilities, a precious group of God's children. In line with this vision, BGST is establishing a Centre for Disability Ministry in Asia (CDMA) in collaboration with the Koinonia Inclusion Network (KIN), a parachurch organisation that enables churches by including people with disabilities.

The CDMA recognises that, while resources for disability ministry might be more abundant in the West, there is still a paucity of such resources available for disability ministry in the Asian context.

Therefore, the CDMA's Mission is:

To produce context-relevant resources to enable disability ministry in Asia

In order to develop such resources, the CDMA will undertake research that embodies BGST's core distinctive of drawing upon "Scripture, Christian tradition, and interdisciplinary studies".



Signing of CDMA Memorandum of Understanding between BGST and KIN. (left) Mr Leow Wen Pin and (right) Dr Lai Pak Wah, Principal, BGST



The CDMA will be directed by Mr Leow Wen Pin, BGST's Lecturer in Biblical and Interdisciplinary Studies, and who is also KIN's President.

The work of the centre will be supported by affiliated Associate Research Fellows and Research Associates. More information about the CDMA can be found on the KIN website at www.kin.org.sg.

"As with BGST's emphasis on the whole people of God and its interdisciplinary approach towards the Christian life, the CDMA endeavours to produce transformational resources that enable disability ministry to serve His people in Singapore and beyond."

Mr Leow Wen Pin (Director, CDMA)

2020

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1-DAY RETREAT (SAT)

 NEW DATE 30
MAY

"SPIRITUAL RETREAT: A SILENCE AND
SOLITUDE WITH GOD FOR GOD'S SAKE"

Ms Seah Chiew Kwan

9:00am-5:00pm

@ Agape Village

bit.ly/silencesolitude

BGST ANNUAL DINNER

13
NOV

More information to be rolled out in the
coming months.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALL BGST CLASSES

In view of the current COVID-19 situation and the latest Government directives, BGST will do our part to support efforts to maintain safety distancing as well as to keep physical contact to groups of less than 10. Out of love and safety consideration for each other, we will conduct classes virtually, on different online platforms. Your lecturers will be communicating with you regarding links and other alternative arrangements. We will monitor the situation towards the end of April and update everyone on the situation here at BGST.

Meanwhile, keep safe, and God bless!

LIBRARY CHARGES FOR NEW AY2020/21

Library charges for the new Academic Year 2020/21 will be priced at \$130. This will allow access to the physical collection, OverDrive and DTL. This charge is compulsory for all Programme Students but is optional for all other students. For inquiries, please contact Daisy at simd@bgst.edu.sg

ATTENTION - LIBRARY MEMBERS!

We will now be charging \$50 per annum for the use of the Library (physical collection only). This will apply when the new AY2020/21 starts. Regarding your deposit of \$100 currently held with us, please choose one option from the following and inform Daisy at simd@bgst.edu.sg:

1. Collect the \$100 deposit personally from BGST (please give Daisy at least 1 week's notice when you would be coming)
2. Convert the \$100 deposit into 2 years' Library Membership
3. Donate the \$100 deposit to BGST.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you!



THE DTL

Please select your institution and enter
your student ID or barcode number.

School

ACTS

Barcode or Student ID

00000001

Log in

RECENT CHANGES TO DTL

Please take note that DTL has modified their website login. To log in, select Biblical Graduate School of Theology under 'School'. Enter your student id under 'Barcode or Student ID'.

Thank you.



THE BOOK CORNER IS CLOSED

If you would like any of the books, you can, for a minimum of \$50 donation. We will provide a bag and you can fill it up with any of the items we have available.

**All brand new!
Hurry! While stocks last!**



FACULTY SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS (MAR-APR)



DR LAI PAK WAH	18 Apr	Reformation Lectures	Mt Hebron BP Church
	26 Apr	John 15:18-27	Singapore Life Church (English Service)
	9 May	Christian Perspectives on Chinese Medicine	Holy Light Presbyterian Church (J.B)
	16-17 May	The Cost of Speaking the Truth (Mark 6:14-29)	Mt Carmel BP Church



MR QUEK TZE-MING	12 Apr	Easter Sunday	Zion Bishan BP Church (Morning Services)
	2-3 May	The Seven Seals (Rev 6:1-17; 8:1-5)	Bible Church Services
	10 May	2 Thessalonians Summary	Zion Bishan BP Church (Morning Services)



DR KWA KIEM KIOK	31 May	Acts 2:1-21	Living Hope Methodist Church
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MR LEOW WEN PIN	3 Apr	Enjoying the Bible	Recording of Cathedral Podcast
	9 Apr	Caregiving to Children with Disabilities	Trinity Theological College Pastoral Theology Class
	5, 19, 26 Apr	The Practices of the Church: The Lord's Supper, Baptism, and Worship	Adult Christian Education Series, Singapore Life Church
	10 May	Peace and Hope (John 16:16-33)	Singapore Life Church (English Service)

A hand is shown dropping a coin into a glass jar. The jar is filled with many coins and has a white label with the word 'DONATE' written on it. Several coins are also scattered on the surface next to the jar. The background is a warm, out-of-focus yellow.

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EVER**

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BIBLICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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Closed Saturdays in June and December)