



WINDOW TO BGST NEWSLETTER

MAY 2020



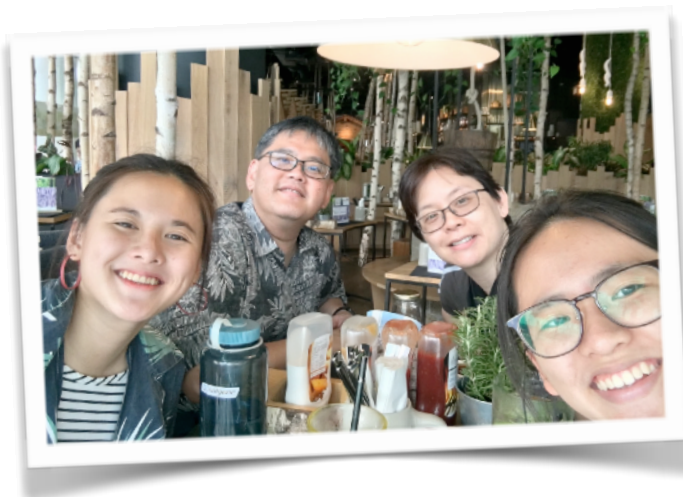
A Personal Reflection on Being a Mom

BY SHARON QUEK

The Quek's then...



...and now



*Mothers are all slightly insane.
-John Salinger*

Every May each year, we get the opportunity to show our appreciation and love for our mothers through gifts or affectionate words. When I was asked to write a piece on "mothering" for *Windows to BGST's* May edition, I wondered what I could say...because there was so much.

I really thank God for the emphasis BGST has on integrating theology and ALL of life because it started me on a journey of integrating ALL of life under God. And that has helped me tremendously in making sense of the amazing chaotic experience of motherhood. I'm still grappling with what it means to parent teenage girls, but I can truly say motherhood's been the most sanctifying thing I've experienced in life so far.

Letting Go and Letting God

Any change in life can be unsettling and I would rank having children as the number one hardest thing I've experienced in my life, coming in way ahead of "A" level and piano exams. When Tze and I decided to start a family, I don't think we realized the enormity of the task. We did know though, that God would be with us and that, as with many other things in life, was deeply comforting. God led me through a process of letting go of self and letting God work in my life, through the blur of feeds and sleep deprivation. That was the first hurdle in parenting, the sheer physicality of taking care of a newborn.

Looking back, those early days stripped me of my sense of control over many things, and I realized I had to "go with the flow" and to lean in hard to God just to last through each day. And that lesson keeps coming back in different ways, in different seasons of the journey of being a parent to the two girls God has given Tze and me.

Saying NO to self

Not only did God challenge me to let go of control, but I learnt the hard lesson of saying "No" to self. No longer was I in charge of my wake-up time, or my schedule for the day. I have this sneaky feeling that God was using my children to teach me how to deny myself because I could no longer just do what I wanted or liked but had to decide humbly to let go of that in

order to serve the needs of someone else. And that's been a valuable lesson, because it's a little way, to understand the heart of Jesus when he came to be with us.

The interesting thing about being a mom for 20 years is that sometimes you say "No" to yourself so often that it becomes hard to remember what it's like to say "Yes" to yourself when you need to. So, in the last few years, I've also learnt how it's important to remember to be kind to yourself and remember how to enjoy that cup of tea, that walk or that time for yourself which helps you connect to yourself, and God.

Fathers...

When we returned to Singapore at the end of 2007 from being abroad in Canada and the UK for Tze's studies, some people asked how I was able to handle taking care of two young children all by myself without family help. They thought it must have been really hard for me since my parents and extended family were not with me in Canada and the UK. I remember thinking at first, yeah, some days were hard, because I was home alone with the baby and then later with 2 kids under 3 years of age. However, as I thought about it, the reality was that Tze was there too! He was available to take over when I really needed a break. And because he was studying, his hours were not as fixed as when he was working, so he did get to be at home perhaps a lot more than if he was working. What a blessing it has been for Tze too, because he had the privilege of

being with the kids perhaps more than the average Singaporean father.

Fathers are a big part of what it means to be a mother! I would say, parenting is a two- person job. And we each bring a different gift to the enormous task of parenting. There are things that I could not do for the girls that Tze could and I appreciate the beauty of God's design for that in any family.

Community is a lifeline

The often-quoted phrase "it takes a village to raise a child" is maybe somewhat of a cliché but it points to something real. I've found it true that the child needs others outside of the family to thrive, and so do the parents! Mothers need other mothers to help them navigate the lows of the parenting journey. That's how I experienced it. It was really a lifeline to be able to call upon a friend who has older kids and ask what to do with a particularly confounding problem. It was wonderful also to have fellow mothers to celebrate the highs of the parenting journey. And often the feeling is one of being in the trenches together! I appreciated the mothers' groups that I was able to be part of, especially when the children were very young, in Vancouver and also in the UK when the kids were still young.

I do realise though, that not all will find community as life-giving and supportive. Other mothers can also be a source of unhealthy pressure and criticism that can

be challenging. Which brings me to my next point...

Guilt is a big part of the parenting journey

One day, I was chatting with another parent in the school yard while waiting to pick up the girls from school and sharing about how challenging it can be cooking, cleaning and caring for the kids. The other parent made an interesting summary remark about parenting which I thought was pretty insightful. She remarked how there's often a lot of guilt in parenting. When I took an honest look, there was always a feeling that I should be cooking healthier meals for them, instructing them more, playing with them even more...etc.

The needs of the children are important, but it's been helpful in my journey as a mom to recognize that they are part of the family and not the only ones in the family. God should still remain in His rightful place, first in our hearts and family. This has helped me understand and mediate my own feelings of guilt.

The sovereignty of God

The other comfort that has helped me through my parenting journey has been realizing that God is sovereign, and not only that, but sovereignly good. On the days when I've thought I've been a terrible

mom, knowing that God *can* and *will* work things out well for His purposes, even through my mistakes in parenting, is a great comfort.

The Mother and Father Heart of God

Becoming a mother has also been the one thing that has helped me understand the parent heart of God. Before I was a parent, I related to God more from the perspective of being His child. After having my kids, I could understand so much more the joys and pains from the parent perspective. Dealing with the vulnerabilities and stubbornness of my own children has helped me empathise and understand what it must be like for our own heavenly Father to relate to us His beloved children.

You don't have to be a Mother to "mother"

Paul in recalling the way he nurtured the Thessalonian Christians, said,

"...just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well." 1 Thess 2: 7b-8

Paul was a spiritual mother and father to many of the gentile churches he planted on his missionary journeys. As I think of the spiritual fathers and mothers that I've had

through my own life journey, my heart is deeply thankful for all of them.

I'm sure God has still more to teach me through my journey into a new season of parenting adult children (they are 20 years and 18 years respectively). In the meantime, I pray God will bless all mothers, and all who have been spiritual mothers to others, with greater love for Him and strength to continue the awesome task of mothering in whatever season God has called them.

Mother is a Verb.
It's Something You Do.
Not Just who You Are.

ANONYMOUS

Sharon Quek

Sharon is an Alumnus of BGST and currently a Ministry Staff (Training & Mobilisation) at Zion Bishan BP Church. She is passionate to see God's Kingdom grow where it isn't. Married to Quek Tze-Ming, together they are the proud and occasionally "wacky" parents of Hannah (20 yrs) and Elizabeth (18 yrs), who unfortunately have inherited some, if not ALL of their parents craziness!



CONTEMPLATING COVID-19 RESOURCES

It all began with our first Webinar on 1 April 2020 – how things have evolved since then, since the seriousness of the effects of The Virus crept into our consciousness, both personally and nationally!

Everywhere we turned, there was some message on Covid, some fake, some real. Some were factual treatments of this topic, and some were just downright scary. And we were wondering how people were coping with Covid – were they reeling from all the facts and figures? Were they in anguish and grief over the loss of a loved one or burdened because someone they knew were in hospital because they tested positive? Or what about the ordinary man or woman trying to deal with a bleak economic future, because things are just not going to be the same? What sense can they make of all this: “Can my business adapt to the times?” “Can I adapt to all these changes?” The scenarios painted seem awash with shades of grey.

In our “Contemplating Covid-19” collection, we want to offer a little colour back into our world, and contemplate the different perspectives in a positive fashion; perspectives that could trigger the imagination, or serve to be a clarion call to action. Some of the articles in this collection offer solace and consolation, and take us through steps that will bring us closer to God. Some invite us to partake in the powerful act of praying together.

Let us cope with Covid together, and let us Contemplate what God is saying to us through the virus <https://www.bgst.edu.sg/contemplating-covid19>. We hope that this collection will be a useful one.

BROWSE OUR COLLECTION

Contemplating Covid-19 Resources

BGST launched a helpful compilation of articles, prayers and materials for your convenience at this time of the pandemic.

PERSPECTIVES

Here we have different news and views of things Covid – and the Christian's response to what is happening. We invite you to read these articles and respond in your own way, as the Spirit takes flight in your heart and mind... you can always write in with your questions or share your responses to admin@bgst.edu.sg

Link: www.bgst.edu.sg/contemplating-covid19-perspectives



PRAYER RESOURCES

Praying through our problems leads to us praising in spite of our problems ... don't know how to pray? We hope that these resources will start you off on a journey getting closer to God.

Link: www.bgst.edu.sg/contemplating-covid19-prayerresources



BROWSE OUR COLLECTION



*Wondering what you could glean from the Bible
for such a time as this?*

Find out in BGST's FREE video lesson series on the Book of Ruth

**6 VIDEO
LESSONS**

1. Lovingkindness in an Uncertain World (Ruth 1)
2. Social Justice in an Unjust World (Ruth 2)
3. God's Blessing in a Broken World (Ruth 3)
4. Redemption in a Fallen World (Ruth 4)
5. Suffering in Troubled Times: Theodicy in Ruth
6. A Blessing to the Nations: Missiology in Ruth



Register now for

**Under the Wings of God:
Lessons from Ruth for Troubled Times**

>> bit.ly/underthewingsofGod



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN PUBLICISING OUR FREE AUDIT COURSES - "THE RELIABILITY OF THE GOSPELS" AND "BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT".

As at 30 April, we have a total of **257 new students** registered with us:

Total registered NT220: 182

Total registered NT160 online: 145

We have had responses from more than 104 churches from 7 countries including Indonesia, UK, Japan, Malaysia and Myanmar. BGST is glad to be serving our brothers and sisters during this time when most of us are housebound and hungering for God's Word. We pray that God's mercy will rest upon us all.

BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT



REGISTER

THE RELIABILITY OF THE GOSPELS



REGISTER

SPIRITUAL RETREAT:

**A SILENCE AND
SOLITUDE
WITH GOD FOR
GOD'S SAKE**



MS SEAH CHIEW KWAN
FACILITATOR

SAT, 30 MAY 2020, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
LIVE VIA ZOOM

+ PRE-RETREAT SPECIAL ON SAT, 23 MAY
FROM 3:00PM - 4:30PM

This retreat is an *invitation* by God to you to participate in the love relationship between God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. The group sessions are facilitated and *experiential*. By His grace, through the various spiritual disciplines, may you enter into the sacred space where you start to be still and rest in God; where scriptures come alive for you as you meditate on the Word; where you become aware of His Presence in the here and now.

S\$60 Fees includes sessions and pre-retreat.



23 MAY 2020
PRE-RETREAT SPECIAL

30 MAY 2020
SPIRITUAL RETREAT

All participants already registered will be sent the two Zoom Links for this Webinar style Retreat and Pre-Retreat Special.

This 2nd round of registrations will close on **16 May 2020**



REGISTER AT

bit.ly/silencesolitude

This retreat was planned in 2019 and originally scheduled for 25 April 2020. Then it was re-scheduled to 30 May 2020 as a result of the circuit breaker measures that kicked in because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the midst of the uncertainty surrounding the Covid-19 outbreak in Singapore, a decision was made to switch to a tele-retreat instead. We no longer have the luxury of a physical get-away space to contemplate God's love in silence and solitude as a community. Now, we are thrust into uncertain times of isolation and anxieties, of a new normal that feels so strange, of a deep sense of being overwhelmed that at times threatens to drown the self, of a busyness that is so disturbingly unfamiliar. It is precisely in a time like this that the heart yearns to abide in God's love in order to have a sense of stability, safety and security. Perhaps it is in a time like this that one needs an intentional radical abiding in God's love.

In this season of Covid-19 uncertainty, I wonder what it would look like for Christians to practise radical abiding in Christ's love, to experience a 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?

2020

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BGST - ART WEBINAR

15
MAY

"WHITHER THE CHURCH POST-COVID-19?"

Speakers: Rev Chris Chia, Mr Tim Wong, Ms

Melissa Kwee

8:00pm-9:30pm

@ Zoom

PRE-RETREAT SPECIAL!

23
MAY

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

Ms Seah Chiew Kwan

3:00pm-4:30pm

Live via Zoom!

bit.ly/silencesolitude

1-DAY RETREAT (SAT)

30
MAY

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

Ms Seah Chiew Kwan

9:00am-5:00pm

Live via Zoom!

bit.ly/silencesolitude

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

BGST WORKS FROM HOME

BGST will be closed from Tuesday 7 April to Monday 1 June 2020 (inclusive). We will open on Tuesday 2 June 2020.

If you need to contact us, please call our hotline at 8525 3289.

You can also contact us via email at inquiry@bgst.edu.sg.

If you need assistance over library matters, please contact Daisy at simd@bgst.edu.sg.

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

For current DTL users who wants to have access to DTL after 30th June, you will need to pay \$130 for 1 year subscription as the current password will be changed. New password will be given upon receipt of payment.

Paynow is the most preferred mode of payment. Send payment details to Daisy at simd@bgst.edu.sg.



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 (MAY-JUN)



DR LAI PAK WAH 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



DR PHILIP SATTERTHWAITE

17 May

Proverbs 24

Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church



DR KWA KIEM KIOK

31 May

Acts 2:1-21

Living Hope Methodist Church



MR QUEK TZE-MING

2-3 May

The Seven Seals (Rev 6:1-17; 8:1-5)

Bible Church Services

21 June

TBC

Grace Singapore Chinese Christian Church



MR LEOW WEN PIN

10 May

Peace and Hope (John 16:16-33)

Singapore Life Church (English Service)

7, 14, 21 June

TBC

Chapel of Christ our Hope

28 June

Disability and Inclusion

Seng Kang Methodist Church (Sunday Services)

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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BIBLICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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Office Hours

Monday to Saturday: 9:00 am – 6:00 pm
(Closed from 12-1 pm, Wed from 12-2 pm;
Closed Saturdays in June and December)