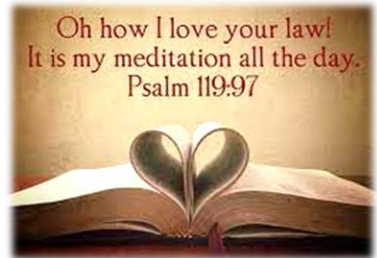


Address: 160 Paya Lebar Road, Orion@Paya Lebar #04-06, Singapore 409022
Sun Worship Service: 10am, Sun School: 11.45am, Wed Prayer Meeting: 8pm
Website: www.sovereignhopebpc.org
Rev Dr Jack Sin: 91160948 (hp) / jacksin710@gmail.com
Elder Loke Tat Luen: lloke822@gmail.com

“Should or Can Christians Practice a kind of Mystical Meditation to Empty our Minds to Relieve Stress Today?”



This is a good question. We noted an increasing number of Christians are interested in a kind of Eastern meditation techniques in an effort to deepen or to grow their “spiritual lives.” Some churches are even offering yoga classes and a kind of transcendental meditation classes, taize retreats (ie mystical meditation camps led by an ecumenical monastic community) for relaxation or for stress relieving and many schools are keen to give it a try and experiment with the latest spiritual fads from the East. **The community is mindful of the importance of mental health, and they are thinking of relevant programme that will help Singaporeans to attain a kind of mental wellness.**

The Bible does speak about meditation. In the Psalms, King David sings of his love of meditating on the Law of God day and night (Psa 119:97). The biblical concept of meditation has a basis and is not without reference to thought and content. The formula for victory in life give to Joshua is in Jos 1:8 which says, *‘This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.’* **It is always directed at and by the Word of God (i.e. scripturally sanctioned trend of thought and not aimlessness or nothingness.) It is not secular or any other form of mystical meditation or a chanting or a mantra that we repeat over and over again to gain inner peace or our own salvation for there is none.**

It is fundamentally different from Eastern mystical meditation, which sets the emptying of the mind as its goal (i.e. nirvana) which is never taught in the bible at all. **The Eastern concept of emptying the mind is contrary to the biblical teaching of filling or renewing the mind with the Word of God (Rom 12:2). Beware of the latest New Age mysticism that has affected some people and even Christians are not spared.**

The younger generation is susceptible as they tend to seek tranquillity in meditation gardens. mind and body relaxing Spas, yoga, reiki classes and other transcendental meditation techniques and what the Beatles brought back in the new age practices to the US in the 1970s had spread since to many in the west and to the East as well. Note what Paul gave a guide to a healthy mental life in this think list in Phil 4:8, *'Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.'*

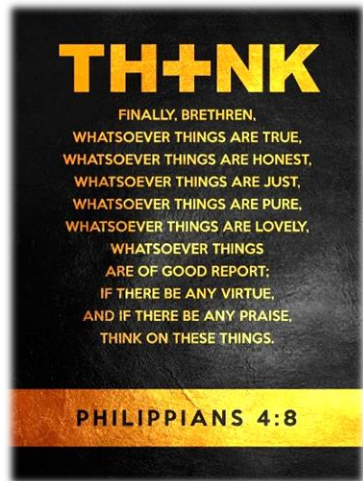
Some approach meditation through so called Christian activity like the ancient ritual of centering prayer; while others develop their own style, whether it is patterned after the breathing techniques of popular New Age guru writer, Deepak Chopra. Some are taught to sit still, usually focusing on a mantra or on their breathing, that one can even clear one mind while walking around, tending a garden or through movement-based activities, such as *tai chi* or *qi gong*. All these are to be avoided.

The biblical concept of meditation is rooted on the Word of God does not involve an emptying of the mind which is dangerous. (see 2Tim 2:15, Psa 119:9,11, Jer 15: 16) Rom 12:1-2 says, *'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.'*

We may clear our minds of ungodly and unbiblical thoughts, of evil cravings and desires for sin. But that must involve a filling to the same mind with the teaching of the Word of God. It involves a mind in which unbiblical thoughts are replaced by the mental application of the truth of Scripture, not a blank slate of meditation that revolves around self, nature or even some spiritual being or thing which can be dangerous or harmful to the soul. Psa 19:14 says, *'Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.'*

There is an acceptable and unacceptable meditation to God, and we need to know the difference.

King David's meditation did not revolve around the breathing of David or some emptiness, nor did David try to empty his mind into empty self or a sense of universal nothingness. He wanted to draw near to God and to hear, study read and memorise and learn the word from God, and he knew he would hear from God in the study of the law. He studied the scriptures in order to purge, sanctify and cleanse his mind of



wrong thoughts and hence to have them replaced with right thoughts and patterns of thinking (Phil 4:8).

Our lives should be lived to the glory of God in our minds as well and not for selfish dreams or imaginations. There are many who want to get rid of stress that is rooted in worldliness and the cares of this world. But getting rid of this worry or anxiety is not a matter of psychological self-therapy, but of bible-based spiritual discipline thru the work of the holy Spirit to have our minds transformed by the Word of God over a period of time.

We live in a world so shaped by medical or therapeutic concerns that most people doubt if God is dealing with them in their stress, distress, haunting thoughts and their cluttered minds. An attempt to empty the mind might well be an effort to listen to the self or the evil one when we should seek to hear from God.

Beyond this, we should also ask the question if the mind can ever be empty by human effort without harm. Ancient hermits (ie Simon the Stylite or Anthony of Egypt) try to do so by living in caves and running away from the world and some have been deranged and suffered from other kinds of mental or psychological ailments. When we attempt to "empty" the mind in this way, we may just shut ourselves in the depravity of our sovereign self. What is true biblical meditation? Isa 26:3-4 says, *'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.'*



Paul in 2 Cor 10:5 exhorts us says, *'Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.'* For Christians, a kind of secular or mystical meditation is definitely a dangerous thing for it potentially opens us to is a possible spiritual peril and obsession, and certainly not a biblically sanctioned means to holiness or spiritual growth. **Rather we should discipline our minds to think biblically and to meditate upon the Word of God as part of our regular and consistent spiritual discipline in our daily Quiet Time and fervent personal prayer and worship. It is not the quest for an empty mind in a deranged world, but to a mind constantly directed by God through Scripture and prayers and guided by the leading of the holy Spirit of God that will preserve us in sound mental wellness in an increasingly disturbed world.**

Hope this helps.

Jack Sin

(Read Jay E Adams, Competent to Counsel, Zondervan Publishing Company, 1986)

SOVEREIGNHOPE
bible presbyterian church

2024 CHURCH CAMP 4D3N



Date:

11-14 June 2024 Tuesday - Friday

Place:

Lotus Desaru Beach Resort

Theme:

Biblical Pathway for Church Growth & Church Health

Speaker:

Rev. David Khobal

Principal - Biblical Reformed Seminary, Myanmar

Camp Fee:

Twin Sharing @ S\$ 380

Single @ S\$ 510

Child (with Bed) @ S\$ 295

Child (without Bed) @ S\$ 180

Child (from age 4 to below 12 Years Old)

Register with: Dn Yue Kay at 97450311

by latest 30 April on first come first served basis



A Sharing by Bro Paul Kong

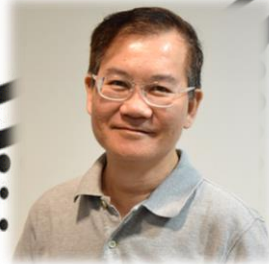
SHBPC just celebrated her 6th Anniversary, and I'd like to take a moment to share a few words.

I've been attending worship at SHBPC for nearly six years now, and on September 19th, 2021, I made the decision to become a member of the church. Since then, I've been involved in the church's worship and service for a simple reason.

SHBPC places strong emphasis on the inspired Word of God. It is infallible and inerrant, providing guidance for every aspect of life. However, simply revering the Bible without grasping its correct interpretation isn't sufficient. That's why Pastor Jack continues to deliver expository preaching, offering thorough and accurate explanations of scripture. Additionally, he guides believers in applying these truths to their daily lives.

Under Pastor Jack's leadership, SHBPC has experienced steady spiritual growth. The church's vision reminds us that engaging with fellow believers within the church's walls isn't enough; we must also venture outside to share the pure gospel with nearby residents and overseas brethren.

May God continue to bless SHBPC and foster its growth for years to come.



THE MAJESTY & SUPREMACY OF THE SON OF GOD

Lord's Day Programme for January to March 2024

JANUARY

- 7 **Christ**, the Name above All Names (Heb 1:1-14)
- 14* The Warning & Work of **Christ** (Heb 2:9-18)
- 21 Admonitions from the Wilderness (Heb 3:1-14)
- 28 Precious Promises & the Power of God (Heb 4:1-16)

FEBRUARY

- 4 **6th Thanksgiving Anniversary**
Equipping a
Worshipping
Working &
Witnessing
Transformed
Church Community
(Rom 12:1-13)
- 11* **Christ**, the Perfect Great High Priest (Heb 5:1-14)
- 18 Appeal to Spiritual Maturity (Heb 6:1-12)
- 25 Understanding Christ & the Sanctuary of God (Heb 9:11-28)

MARCH

- 3 The Lamb of God & Challenges to the People of God (Heb 10:11-25)
- 10* Examples of Faith Tested & Tried (Heb 11:1-16)
- 17 Counsel for the Christian Race (Heb 12:1-17)
- 24 Sacred Duties of Every Believer (Heb 13:1-17)
- 29* **Good Friday**
The Vicarious Atonement Explained (Rom 5:6-19)
- 31 **Resurrection Sunday Service**
The Implications of the Empty Tomb (1 Cor 15:1-23)

SOVEREIGNHOPE

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Blessed Birthday to our Brethren (Feb)
- Dn Paul, Choo Siang, Chan Ping, Marcus -

Thank God for the provision
of a piano for the church
through Bro Daniel Phang's
cousin, Marianne.



A lively discussion on
“Discerning the Will of God” at the Sun School
class with biblical principles to work on.

Memory Verse

Heb 8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Sunday Worship Service! If you are here for the first time, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave. Those who share the church vision to acquire a place of worship in due time, may designate your offerings to the SHBPC Church Building Fund.
2. Pastor brings us God's Word this morning on "***Understanding Christ & the Sanctuary of God (Heb 8:1-13)***", continuing the quarterly series on "***The Majesty & Supremacy of the Son of God (Book of Hebrews)***".
3. Next Sunday, Pastor will preach "***The Lamb of God & Challenges to the People of God (Heb 10:11-25)***".
4. Sunday School classes after the worship service continue as follows:
 - Westminster Confession of Faith (Pastor)
 - Studies in 2 Chronicles (Dr Kwong Leen)
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on every Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom with both local and overseas brethren. We have systematic studies on Kingdoms, Covenants and Canon of the Old Testament and the Parables of Jesus. Join us for a time of profitable learning. [Zoom ID:883 9662 4157 Passcode: 218178].
6. Outreach to **All Saints Home (Tampines)** is confirmed on **Sun 3 Mar 2024, 2.00-2.45pm**. For those who have registered, do wait for further details from Dn Yue Kay.
7. Our **Annual Church Camp** will be held on **June 11-14, 2024**, at **Lotus Desaru Beach Resort** on the theme "***Biblical Pathway for Church Growth & Health***". Rev David Khobal, Principal of Myanmar Theological Seminary, will be our Camp Speaker. Contact Dn Yue Kay (hp:97450311) or Dn Paul (hp:97314733) for more details and registration by 30 April 2024.
8. Pray for our brethren in their:
 - Health: Janet's full recovery from hand and leg op,
 - Kin Hoong's continuing medical investigations,
 - Anthony's daily radiotherapy treatment that started on 20 Feb for a month.
9. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The prayer list is available in church. [Zoom ID:863 7527 5431 Passcode: 625551].
10. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mail to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
 - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**

Kindly indicate "**Church Building Fund**" if you would like to designate towards this cause.