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## **The Benefit of Reading the Bible & Sound Christian Books for the Soul**

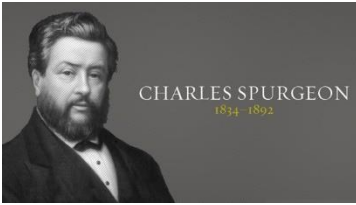
*'The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.'* 2 Tim 4:13

As we have come back to worship at our church premises 4 Sundays ago after a season of 3 months of both the circuit breaker and phase I of the pandemic, we continue to use Fide Vitae Resources for our church worship services. We are blessed with many good reformed books around us. I would like to encourage all members and friends to read and get sound reformed books for yourself (or to give it to someone as a present) from Fide Vitae or elsewhere. We need to teach and train ourselves and our children to read properly in a disciplined manner and not just play computer games (or watch movies on Youtube or Netflix) on the handphone, laptop and Think Pad, letting our precious time go by during the vacation. Angie knows that I will not travel without a book in my bag and I recently read "The hand of God" by Frederick Leahy when we traveled to attend and preach in a conference. We bought and gave away many books to the pastors in Country X, Myanmar, and India and it was a joy to share with them the Word of God. Let us set the example for them to follow and here is an example for us to emulate, namely Charles Spurgeon, the notable British prince of preachers. He read widely, devouring books in his 7,000 strong home library and also wrote many good books. Dr. Peter Masters of the Metropolitan Tabernacle follows in his footsteps today.



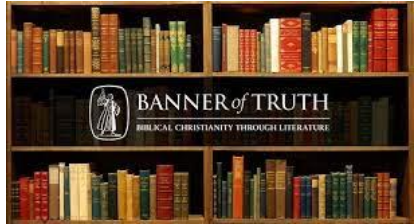
### **1. Know that Your Reading of Books Can be Impactful.**

Books can affect and influence a person's life. They shape our worldview values, convictions, and thinking processes. If not, the world will take over and corrupt our minds with unsound ideals. The quote from Spurgeon below comes from his writings or sermons and he shared wisdom for Christian readers on reading and choosing books.

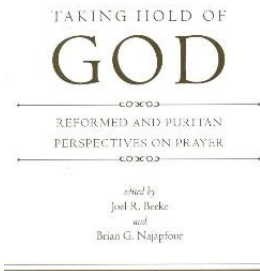


*“Give yourself unto reading. The man who never reads will never be read; he who never quotes will never be quoted. He who will not use the thoughts of other men’s brains, proves that he has no brains of his own. You need to read.”*

*“Reading maketh a full man and writing an exact man,”* Francis Bacon said and let us consciously develop an appetite and discipline for devouring sound edifying books. Remember what we read and underline them, using them in your speech, sharing with others, or in your writing. We cannot underestimate how our children and all of us are affected by what they see, hear, and read. We must make a conscious effort by the grace of God to influence our children in their tender years for the Lord before it is too late. I grew up reading all kinds of books in primary and secondary school from fiction-like novels (i.e. the Famous Five) to the Reader’s Digest, to Christian classics like Pilgrim’s Progress, and the Canterbury Tales, etc. The later part of my Junior College and NUS days was spent reading Christian books like Joshua by Alan Redpath, How to give away your Faith by Paul Little, Evangelism by Robert Coleman, J I Packer’s books, Foxes Book of Martyrs, the Imitation of Christ, and The City of God, among others. I owe it to the Puritans for much of what my theological convictions are today. I read the Banner of Truth



paperbacks on many Puritan writers from Thomas Watson, John Owens, Richard Baxter, to Thomas Brooks, A W Pink, Walter Chantry, Sinclair Ferguson, and others. They shaped and affected my thinking processes, my Christian worldview, faith, and still affect my teaching, preaching, and writing today, as well as in my ministering to churches and in bible colleges.



I do not have many assets but my study room has about 4,000 Christian books (including Angie’s collection of about 500 books) and I bought another few books recently, including The Beauty and Glory of the Reformation. I am currently reading one now, titled ‘Taking Hold of God’ by Joel Beeke & Najapfour, and it gives me sound eternal substance for my soul. Seek knowledge and the highest is the knowledge of God (theology) and pay the price for it (and get

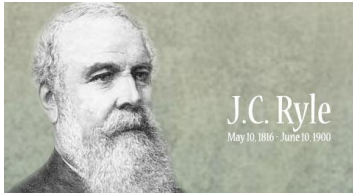
the prize as well) and the greatest and best book to read is none other than the Bible itself.

## 2. Reading is a Good Way to Spend Leisure Time

We are persuaded that the very best way for you to be spending your leisure time, is to be reading, praying, playing games, sports, or even resting. You may get much instruction from books which afterwards you may use as a true weapon in your Lord and Master's service. Paul cries, "Bring the books". How do you spend your Sabbath Day after worship? Is it not a good time to read before the new week begins?

Cicero says a room without books is like a body without a soul. How is your house equipped, does it have good books for your family?

Consider these quotes on reading:



*The end to which good men's libraries finally come is a melancholy subject. Few things are so loved by some, and despised and neglected by others, as books, and specially theological books. J.C. Ryle*

*What is Christianity? Well, let us use the famous title of the old book by Henry Scougal: it is The Life of God in the Soul of Man. Once more I commend the historical approach to you. What really led to the great Evangelical Awakening in the 18th century, its ultimate source, was the reading of Henry Scougal's book by George Whitefield and John and Charles Wesley...It was the reading of that book by old Henry Scougal, who had lived in Scotland in the previous century, that set them on the road to receiving this great fullness, and to their amazing, unparalleled usefulness. Martyn Lloyd-Jones*

*I am the product of so many more books than I could ever name. Calvin Miller*

*Though fallen on hard times of late, books have played an essential role in Church history...John Bradford, himself only days away from being bound to the stake, offered a petition that was short and to the point—that he might "have his books, and time enough to peruse them". Yes, some men maintain well-focused priorities to the end. Publishers Notes*

*The man who does not read books has no advantage over the man who cannot read them. Mark Twain*

*One thing, however is certain: Reading can never die out among Christians. This is because the whole Christian revelation centers around a Book. Gene E. Veith*

*For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose offspring they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest worth and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. John Milton*

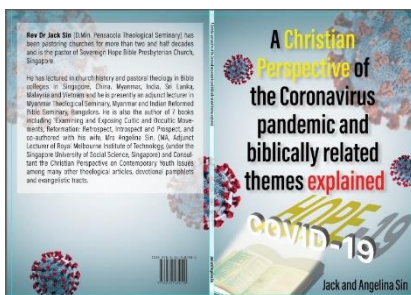
## 3. Parents Do Well to Help Their Children to Develop the Habit of

## Reading

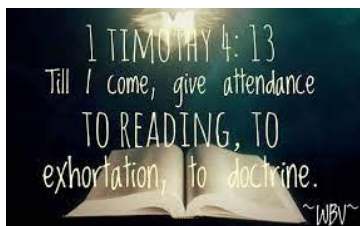
For fathers and mothers, pray about investing in the life of your child or children (not only in their academic studies which is important) but also in grooming their souls in the fear and knowledge of God through the reading and understanding of the will and Word of God in the Bible, and most of all, the application of it after understanding it, even from relevant children books. Begin with them when they are young; buy and read with them some age appropriate Christian books for a start. Reward them with books for their hard work in school and bring them to libraries and bookrooms as well. Get them interested in church history, OT, NT, Apologetics, Evangelism, or missions. Have a reading corner in the house or a specified time for reading in the week and get them interested in spiritual things. Let it begin with you as the parent and share with them what you read with interest.

Before he was executed by Emperor Nero in AD 67, the Apostle Paul asked for his books to be brought to him to read along with the old manuscripts of the Old Testament Bible (2 Tim 4:13). William Tyndale, the notable English Reformer, did the same in 1536, asking also for a Hebrew Bible and lexicon while in prison before his execution in a city in Belgium (who gave to all of us the English Bible sealed with his blood).

The church is to be committed to the promotion and dissemination of sound gospel tracts and Christian books for our edification even in the midst of a pandemic, both in Chinese and English, as well as in other languages. A latest book on the Christian perspective of the coronavirus pandemic and biblically related themes examined will be ready soon, God willing, in Spanish and English.



Note also Paul's advice to young Timothy, 1 Timothy 4:13, *'Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.'*



There is a dire call to diligent meditation and serious and purposeful reading of the word of God that we may be able to exhort and edify others in sound doctrine. What we do not have we cannot give. Build up a reservoir of knowledge and wisdom to be able to minister effectively to others in due season and deepen your Christian

experience too in the application of what you have learnt. Less of the handphone chatter and computer games, and more of Christ and His Word, prayers, and family bonding time.

## Conclusion

There is a good reading habit that is sadly being lost by some today. Christian parents who love the Lord should pray and encourage their children and share with them good Christian books that teach the words of everlasting life. Set a good example and develop the habit of studying the bible and sound Christian books (not Harry Potter and other unedifying books), read with them and understand the content well and live them out in your own lives first. Let it be impactful to ourselves first, and to our progeny and others later, then share it to the spiritual benefit of many souls to come.

Psalm 68:11, *'The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.'*

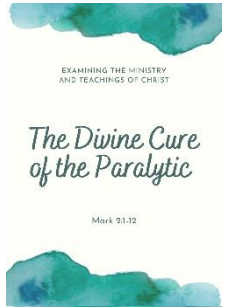
Jack Sin



Thank God for bringing 35 people to worship with us last Sunday with stringent safety measures and there were new friends who are seeking to grow in the word of God.



**Sermon Summary – 26 July 2020**  
**The Divine Cure of the Paralytic – by Rev**  
**Jack Sin**  
**(Mark 2:1-12)**



The message started with a 10mins introduction on the geography and topography of the land of Israel. The Lord was in Capernaum which is 26km from Nazareth at the beginning of His public ministry.

The 3 salient points are:

**1. The Hopelessness of the sick man (vs 1-2)**

- All of us have a serious condition and it is more than physical. Eph 2:12 says that we are without Christ and without hope and without God and there are serious consequences. All of us are under the bondage of sin & we all need the healing of the Great Physician, not just men who may try to help us.
- Many are not conscious of it but this sick man knew and he was seeking treatment for his condition. But he was unable to come to Jesus by himself. We are depraved and will not be able to seek God on our own but by the Spirit of God and there are some who helped him to the Lord as he was seeking recovery from his ailment.

**2. The Helpfulness of Friends who care (vs 3-4)**

- He had 4 good friends and they were ingenious in bringing their friend to the Lord from the roof of the house and God honoured them. They were careful and skillful and God honoured their faith. Generally, it can be said that there are 4 levels of friendship:

**A**cquaintances - **B**rotherly - **C**oncerned - **D**evoted

They are of an ascending order. Develop and deepen friendships by purposeful interactions

The 4 friends were of the devoted level of friendship.

Consider:

- 2 Tim 2:22 - "...follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with **them** that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." - are your friends such? Note the "them" in the verse it refers to the people we mix with and are they godly men and women?
- Who are your friends today? Do they fear God? Are you such a friend to others? Do we care enough to reach out or are we indifferent to those outside Christ?

### 3. **The Healing Power of the Saviour amidst Hostility** (vs 5-12)

- It is noteworthy that the Lord saw their faith, ie the faith of the 4 friends

The faith of friends can influence the faith of a person (in this case, the paralytic) although the paralytic believed Christ on his own as well as we see it later .Do not give up on someone who need Christ and pray for wisdom to bring him or her to the Lord as he leads us

- Due to your faith and desire to reach out to others, people come to know the Lord by his sovereign will and the inner working of the Spirit. (Rev Jack recounted he first came to know the Lord because his eldest sister has the faith to reach out to him with the gospel when he was in primary school in 1972.)
- The paralytic had a sin problem which is a bigger problem than his physical problem that many do not see nor know but Christ does.

When one is sick, often it's not just medical treatment you need, but also seek spiritual healing from the Lord (they go hand in hand together) see Jas 5:14-16, seeking Christ and medical attention goes together as we seek prayer for health and healing and consulting a doctor as well.

- Healing from the Lord and the apostles in the Bible is immediate, complete and not gradual or partial or incomplete as it is claimed or practiced in some churches today.

- The paralytic's greatest need was not only to be healed physically, but also spiritually as he was still in his sins and needed divine pardon and Christ gave him both.
- There will always be others who were not happy and murmured against Him. Satan will also discourage us from coming to the Lord by attacking us but the Lord will prevail in the end as we trust in Him.
- The Lord asked him to arise, take up his bed and walked and he did not doubt but obeyed and by faith he did walk and he was healed and rewarded. The power of God to save is in Christ our Lord and we need to come to Him today.

### Conclusion

We need to examine ourselves: do we know that we need the Lord too, just like the sick man as we are all sinners and the wages of sin is death? Do we bring others to the church to hear the Word of the Lord on the hope of salvation and for spiritual healing and do we come ourselves daily for divine pardon with the confession of sins to the Lord? Something to think about and act upon prayerfully

Kim Meng

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## Memory Verse

*James 5:16* Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

## Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! Kindly comply with the safety measures available on the notice boards. For our visitors, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave.
2. Rev Jack Sin speaks today on “The Healing of the Impotent Man” (John 5:1-15, continuing the Jul to Sep 2020 theme of “Examining the Ministry & Teachings of Christ”.
3. Rev Jack Sin speaks next Sunday on “The Demonstration of Faith” (Luke 7:1-11).
4. Sunday School classes continues in church after the worship service
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom.
6. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom.
7. Those who would like to help with the cleaning or safe management procedures of the church, please see Dn Yue Kay.
8. Those who have a testimony to share may submit to Pastor for the weekly.
9. Pastor is still available for counselling via WhatsApp, Email or Mobile.
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 mailed 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**