



## A Final Blow and a Second Chance

*John 19:31-42*

### **English Services**

*(8 & 10:30 a.m., & 5:30 p.m.)*

Prelude  
Call to Worship  
Worship through Praise  
Worship through Fellowship  
Worship through Giving  
Worship in Music  
Scripture Reading  
Anthem  
Worship in the Word  
*Pastor Larry Pabiona*  
Celebration of the  
Lord's Supper  
Benediction

### **Filipino Service**

*(3 n.h.)*

Paghahanda  
Tawag sa Pagsamba  
Pagsamba sa Pag-awit  
Pagkilala sa mga Bisita  
Pagsamba sa Pagbibigay  
Natatanging Bilang  
Pagbasa ng Salita ng Diyos  
Pakikinig sa Salita ng Diyos  
*Pastor Emer Manaloto*  
Pagdiriwang ng  
Banal na Hapunan  
Pangwakas na Panalangin  
at Basbas

*See inset inside for the **Traditional Service (Sat., 6 p.m.)** program.*



**3/4 March 2018**

Vol. 40, No. 8



# A Final Blow and a Second Chance

Today's Message (3/4 March 2018) /  
*John 19:31-42*

THE WAY TO  
MOTIVATE  
YOURSELF TO SERVE  
CHRIST IS NOT TO  
GIVE YOURSELF A  
GUILT TRIP, NOT  
TO PUT PRESSURE  
ON YOURSELF  
OR LET PEOPLE  
MANIPULATE  
YOUR EMOTIONS—  
BUT SIMPLY, LIKE  
NICODEMUS AND  
JOSEPH, TO REALIZE  
WHAT JESUS DID  
FOR YOU ON THE  
CROSS.

The death of people significant to us never leaves us the same. Some harden and worsen (Saul at Stephen's murder, Acts 7:58-8:1) but many are changed for the better. While the Jews thought they had gotten rid of a Messiah wannabe and the soldiers thought they had finished just another gruesome routine, Joseph and Nicodemus gave up their secrecy and realized that life and Love Incarnate had given them a second chance to show themselves followers of Christ. There might be something here for other secret followers today:

## 1. THE SOLDIERS GIVE A FINAL BLOW TO THE LAMB OF GOD (VV. 31-37)

- The purpose of the soldier:
  - Medical experts disagree on exactly what happened, but it's obvious from the flow of blood and water that Jesus was dead before the spear thrust. Even if He hadn't already died, this spear thrust would have finished the job. It wasn't a minor puncture wound—it left a scar large enough to put a hand into (*John 20:27*).
- The significance of this event:
  - Proof of Christ's death: this debunks the "Swoon theory" and other similar theories claiming Jesus never died.
  - There may be a symbolic meaning: the blood speaks of our justification (salvation), the water, of our sanctification (holiness) and cleansing. The blood takes care of the guilt of sin; the water deals with the stain of sin.
  - The fulfilment of Scripture (*Psalms 34:20 and Zechariah 12:10*). John placed great importance on the fact that he had witnessed this for himself and that he was telling the truth.
  - The proof for Thomas (*John 20:25-27*)

### Traditional Service

(Saturday, 6 p.m.)

Prelude

Call to Worship

Worship through Praise

Worship through Giving

Worship in Music

Doxology

Worship through Fellowship

Scripture Reading

Anthem

Worship in the Word

*Pastor Larry Pabiona*

Celebration of

the Lord's Supper

Benediction



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## 2. THE SECRET CHRISTIANS GET A SECOND CHANCE FROM THE SON OF GOD (VV. 38-42)

- Joseph and Nicodemus came out of hiding. Joseph was a leader and honored member of the Jewish high council. Nicodemus, also a member of the high council, had come to Jesus by night before (*John 3:1-21*), and later tried to defend him before the other religious leaders (*John 7:50-52*).
- You see both sadness and triumph here:
  - John treated the idea of secret disciples negatively (*John 12:42-43*). Either both Joseph and Nicodemus absented themselves from the meeting of the council which fabricated the charge against Jesus, or they sat silent through it all. What a difference it would have made to Jesus, if, among these condemning voices, one voice had been raised in His support. But Nicodemus and Joseph were afraid.

We often leave our tributes until people are dead. One flower in life is worth all the wreaths in the world in death; one word of love and thanks in life is worth all the eulogies in the world when life is gone.

- But most of all, there is triumph! The death of Jesus affected Joseph and Nicodemus in a way that his life could not do. No sooner had Jesus died than Joseph forgot his fear and confronted Pilate with a bold request for Jesus' body. No sooner had Jesus died than Nicodemus was there to bring a tribute that all men could see. The cowardice, the hesitation, the concealment were gone. The power of the Cross was turning the coward into the hero, and the waverer into the man who took an irrevocable decision for Christ (*John 12:32*).
- These men were changed more by Jesus' death than by his life. The way to motivate yourself to serve Christ is not to give yourself a guilt trip, not to put pressure on yourself or let people manipulate your emotions—but simply, like Nicodemus and Joseph, to realize what Jesus did for you on the Cross. It will turn your life around once it really sinks in.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Joseph and Nicodemus gained far more than they ever lost. By declaring allegiance to Christ on earth they gained eternal acceptance in heaven (*Matthew 10:32-33*). They gained an eternal relationship with the risen Savior. They gained treasures in heaven. Remember Jesus' words: **"For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?"** (*Matthew 16:25-26*)

Are you a secret believer? Do you hide your faith from your friends and fellow workers? This is an appropriate time to step out of hiding and let others know Whom you follow. The Son of God gives second chances, even for secret disciples ■

## WHAT'S NEXT?

In response to queries about what lies ahead, outlined below is the sequence of messages from March to April. We return to Genesis while continuing our Communion Series on John every first Sunday.

1. **March 4, Communion Sunday:**  
A Final Blow and A Second Chance  
(*John 19:31-42*)
2. **March 11:** The Covenant of Circumcision (*Genesis 17:1-27*)
3. **March 18:** God Reiterates His Promise of a Son (*Genesis 18:1-15*)
4. **March 25:** The Overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah (*Genesis 18:16-19:38*)
5. **April 1, Communion Sunday:**  
The Resurrection (*John 20:1-23*)
6. **April 8:** Sarah and Abimelech (*Genesis 20:1-18*)
7. **April 15:** Isaac Displaces Ishmael (*Genesis 21:1-21*)
8. **April 22:** Covenant With Abimelech (*Genesis 21:22-34*)
9. **April 29:** The Testing of Abraham (*Genesis 22:1-19*)

## GCF CONFERENCES ON LOVING GOD AND LOVING OTHERS

Then on May 11 and 12, we will be greatly blessed to have Pastor Edmund Chan and his wife minister to us in "Loving God: A Discipleship

Conference". The emphasis of the Conference is about our first love. In July, our GCF Missions Conference theme would be about "Loving Others", thus completing the Lord Jesus' Great Commandment.

## YOUR OIKOS AND MINE

I will take this opportunity to remind us all about listing, praying for, and investing in our respective Oikos circles. Do you need to turn them into a Growth Group? It's OK if you can, but if not, you must plug them into one. I pray the wonderful testimonies of Christine De Vera and Apple Lim last Sunday highlighted for you that there is a Growth Group for everyone at GCF. In connection with this, we have an **Oikos Training for All**, where we will learn to reach out to our own communities. It will be held next week, March 11 (Sun.), after the 10:30 a.m. service. Please contact Angel at 0932 371 3457 to pre-register.

## MORE MEDICAL DOCTORS NEEDED FOR OPERATION COMPASSION

I think the announcement last Sunday mentioned that paramedicals are needed for our GCF medical ministry. The fact is they also need more medical doctors. If you are interested, please join the Luncheon today. Please contact Angel at 0932 371 3457 to sign-up ■

# Ablaze Devotional

*Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!* — Psalm 32:1-2, NLT

We have this idea of confession as something that involves reciting our wrongdoings before God. We might be thinking that once we admit to committing such wrongs and ask for forgiveness, we automatically become good before God. God is a forgiving God after all.

But there is so much more in confession that Scripture teaches us. In Psalm 32, we find that confession is not just an admission of sin, but an admission of need. Confession is facing up to what is wrong with ourselves and yielding to the grace and new life God offers. It is to live in complete honesty that the only way to live is living under God's care and guidance.

Without confession, in light of this psalm, it is hard to live in complete honesty. With all the guilt, shame, misgivings, or offenses we carry each day, we surely are wasting away. But letting them out in confession frees us. More so, with a loving and merciful God, we are forgiven and given new life.

Let us ready our hearts to find joy as we lay down our very selves before the feet of Jesus. May it be that in doing so we will know that His forgiveness frees us from guilt and shame, and restores us so we can move and walk in obedience. As we share the bread and the wine at the Lord's table, let us come as we are, receiving His life and work that transform our lives into His image. As we let the Holy Spirit search our hearts, may we go forth in joy celebrating the forgiveness and new life we find in God ■

## GCF PRAYER GATHERINGS AT THE CHAPEL

The GCF Hour of Prayer  
Tuesdays, 6:00 to 7:00 a.m.

Midweek Prayer Service  
Wednesdays, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

## Ministry Opportunities + Other Announcements



### OC LUNCHEON

Today, 12 noon, venue TBD  
All medical professionals who are interested to serve through Operation Compassion are invited  
Contact Angel at 0932 371 3457 to sign-up



### PRAISE FACTORY AUDITIONS

Open to all kids 6-10 years old, preferably boys  
March 10 (Sat.), 9 a.m. to 12 nn. at Room A201  
Auditionees must prepare one song with their own minus one. They are also encouraged to be ready to dance and act.



### OIKOS TRAINING FOR ALL

Learn to reach out to your own community  
March 11 (Sun.), after the 10:30 a.m. service  
Venue TBD | Snacks will be served  
Contact Angel at 0932 371 3457 to pre-register



### LOVING GOD CONFERENCE

A Discipleship Conference with  
Pastor Edmund and Ann Chan  
May 11-12 (Fri. & Sat.) here at GCF  
Tickets are available today (800.00 & 400.00)  
at the ministry information booth

### STEWARDSHIP REPORT

February 2018

|          | February Budget     | Received, Feb. 1-28    |
|----------|---------------------|------------------------|
| General  | 10,980,032          | 7,248,855              |
| Missions | 927,000             | 712,881                |
|          | Jan. to Feb. Budget | Received, Jan. to Feb. |
| General  | 20,796,048          | 14,160,997             |
| Missions | 1,854,000           | 1,678,136              |

### Flower Ministry

The flowers this week are given with praise and thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness, grace and blessings by an anonymous donor, the Basilad family, and the Messiah College.

Please call 632 1354 to 56 for inquiries on how to participate in this ministry.



## How reaching out in the workplace helped me in my spiritual journey

by Raya Sabio

My journey serving in the Connect Ministry of GCF has blessed me with two things—it helped in knowing and loving Christ more, and it taught me a lot about reaching out to the people God has surrounded me with in my workplace.

It started when I unexpectedly became part of the ministry's core group more than ten years ago. My sister, Ate Bini, and I shared the excitement of jumpstarting a reaching-out effort to people who belong to the same industry as we do. But aside from the joy of seeing people come to Christ, I was able to grow in my love for Him, and in my passion to make Him known, through the challenges that reaching out and leading others entail.

I learned that leading actually means serving others. Serving others is loving them and understanding them. And in the course of doing it, you realize that serving others is not always a good experience. You will be hurt, but in the process God draws you closer to wrap you in His love and remind you of the example of His Son, Jesus.

This love also showed when we had conflicts in the ministry. We saw how God was ready to forgive us. Even until today, we see how He continuously reveals His forgiving love, and we are compelled by this love to constantly be grateful, and to be kinder to one another.

I praise God for how He has inspired our church to have a heart for the people in the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry. I hope that all of us, personally, will have hearts also eager to share Christ in our own workplaces ■

**ON THE COVER:** Aloe vera flowers in bloom along the coast of South Africa ([pixabay.com](http://pixabay.com)). The use of aloe (together with myrrh) for embalming was very common in ancient Near East and Egypt, especially among nobility. In ancient Egyptian royal burials, a noble man shows his esteem for a deceased king by the amount of aloe he brings for the king's burial.

## Join a GROWTH GROUP

### HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE Y-GROUPS

Sundays, 9:30-10:30 a.m.,  
and 4:30-5:30 p.m.  
At GCF (Youth Center, 6th flr.)

### ICU (Intimacy Care Unit) GG

*for Couples aged 30 up*  
Saturdays, 4-6 p.m. at GCF (Rm. A109)

### GREEN MEADOWS GG

*for Couples aged 40 up*  
Every other Thursday, 8-10 p.m.  
at Green Meadows Subdivision

### NEW GG (GATHERING CONTACTS)

*for Single Men and Women aged 21-30*  
Tentatively scheduled on Sundays,  
3-5 p.m. at GCF

### YACIES TUESDAY GG

*for Single Men and Women aged 30 up*  
Tuesdays, 7-10 p.m. at GCF (Rm. BM07)

### SPORTS GGs (THREE GROUPS)

*for Boys aged 11 to 18*  
Saturdays, 12 nn.-3 p.m. at GCF Multi-  
purpose Gym (6th flr.)

### Pass by the GGEX (Growth Group Express)!

Sundays, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room B124  
Get a feel of what a Growth Group is like before you participate in one.  
Come and join us!

*If you are interested in joining any of the small groups above, fill out the tear-off form inside this bulletin, drop it in the offering bag or submit it to the Growth Group booth at the lobby. For more information, you can text or call us at 0917 532 7740.*



## Greenhills Christian Fellowship

Know Christ and Make Him Known

Ruby cor. Garnet Roads, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1605  
Tel. Nos. 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80, 635 0082 to 83 | Fax No. 632 1357  
Mobile No. 0920 961 2964, Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.  
E-mail: [email@gcf.org.ph](mailto:email@gcf.org.ph) • Website: [www.gcf.org.ph](http://www.gcf.org.ph)

How may we  
**SERVE YOU BETTER?**

Fill-out this tear off form and drop it in an offering bag/box or at the Ministry Information Booth. Please check all that is applicable:

- I am a first-time guest.
- I prayed to receive Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord today.
- I would like to know how to become a Christian.
- I am interested in becoming a member of this church.
- I want to join a Growth Group.**  
(Specify age group: \_\_\_\_\_)  
(Specify group composition: \_\_\_\_\_)
- I want to start a Growth Group.
- I want to host a Growth Group.

Please share with us some information about yourself:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_ Landline no.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mobile no.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Year of membership: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Growth Group (if you already have one): \_\_\_\_\_

*Today is 3/4 March 2018, and I attended the 8 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 3:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. (Sat) (encircle the time).*

Write below *any* inquiry or prayer item that you want to ask or share.

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# God's Way to Heaven

## THE GOSPEL

“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”  
*(1 Corinthians 15:3-4).*

## THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD

**God is holy and righteous:** “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty, the whole earth is full of his glory” *(Isaiah 6:3)*. **He requires holiness of us as well:** “Be holy, for I am holy” *(1 Peter 1:16)*.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT MAN

**Man is sinful:** “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” *(Romans 3:23)*.  
**Sin demands a penalty:** “For the wages of sin is death” *(Romans 6:23)*.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRIST

**Christ is the expression of God's love for us:** “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” *(Romans 5:8)*. **Christ paid the penalty of our sins and died for sinners:** “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God” *(1 Peter 3:18)*. **Through Christ, God offers man reconciliation:** “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them” *(2 Corinthians 5:18)*.

## WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

**Believe and receive Jesus as Lord and Savior:** “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” *(Romans 10:9)*.

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*PRAYER: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. I believe that you died on the cross in my place, to save me from my sins, and I accept you as my Savior, and the Master of my life forever. Amen.*

## Need someone to talk to?

Visit the Emmaus Road Counseling Center at the GCF Mezzanine floor or contact 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80 or 0917 532 7794 for inquiries.

For hospital or house visitation, dedication service, or funeral service requests, please call or text 0917 532 7794.