

EXPERIENCING HIS REFRESHING FIRE!

Ps Darien Choo

Year 2012 was a great year God has blessed me, my family and Trinity Community Centre (TCC) Singapore. The climax of the year culminated in our embarking on a journey on 26th November 2012 for our long awaited Holy Spirit Retreat, where all members of the church are looking for an encounter with God and His refreshing Fire! Everyone was very excited when we set off from Singapore towards Melaka where the retreat will be held.

2 bus loads of families and friends were preparing to run after God's heart. This also included our Philippines TCC pastor Joseph and his worship team that came down to Singapore to join us on this trip. After 3.5 hours, we finally reached our destination at Hotel Equatorial, Melaka. The hotel staff warmly welcomed the people and we were all ushered into a function room where we will be conducting our briefing and allocation of room keys. It was pretty congested as we had our luggage and bags but it was just enough to accommodate us. But there was something that wasn't quite right and we came to know that this room was in fact also the room that we are going to hold our service.

The PA system wasn't good enough to project a good worship session as the capacity was for seminar usage only. Immediately I went to look for the Floor Manager to explain the situation and he shared with me that all the function rooms have been used up. I took the initiative to look at the neighbouring room to explore any possibility to swap in order to increase the space for the worshippers to wave at their banners and dance for the glory of the Lord.

We desired to go all out for Jesus. However, the answer from the manager-in-charge was negative and we have to use whatever we have. Nevertheless, it didn't stop me from moving up to the hotel management to request for better options and I shared with them that this was a serious problem for us.

That evening, all of us assembled at the room to have our first night's meeting. The service was awesome with many interesting encounters with the Holy Spirit. The Fire of God fell on many brothers and sisters. Even though the worship team struggled with the speaker volume, we still sung with all our might and gave all the praises and thanksgivings to the Lord to the maximum capacity our lungs could take. The banners were squeezed, but were still raised high up for Jesus.

Nothing could hinder us from giving our best to our Saviour, Messiah, King of kings and Lord of lords, our reigning King Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God! Suddenly, I received a call that the Hotel Event Manager was angry and want to see the person-in-charge for our retreat.

In my mind, I perceived that we might have offended any of the staff or our activity was too loud that affected other guests in the hotel. Amazingly my heart was filled with the Lord's fire and faith was extremely high. Instead of fear, there was an interesting feeling of confidence that surged out of me to walk out of the service to meet the Event Manager. In my spirit, I was praying that the favour of God be upon us and I knew our God is the One and Almighty God who always has a better plan and purpose for us and who is greater than our hearts.

When I met and greeted the Event Manager and his Floor Manager, contrary to my expectation, I learned they were concerned about our request and say that all their function rooms were taken up, except for one last option. With enthusiasm in my heart, I asked them what the last option was.

As soon as I heard the option, I wasn't sure whether my ear was playing a trick on me or the staff was joking with me. The question was, "Mr. Choo, we only have the main ballroom left. Do you want to take a look?" Immediately, I gave a steadfast answer, "Let's take a look!" I could feel my heart beating fast and hard. As the staff opened up the ball room, I saw the incredible space that could accommodate 100 tables and the centre stage was there, which was more than perfect for the worship team.

And you won't believe the next question I received from the manager. He asked, "Is this big enough?" The indescribable joy in my heart laughing up to the heavens in my spirit was bubbling inside of me, and I was trying my very best to keep my composure, I replied, "Sure, this will be very good." It was like Joshua and Caleb who went to look at the Promised Land and was sure to carry back the good news (Numbers 14:7).

I could now understand the feeling of seeing God's promise coming to pass. Going back to the service, I quickly went straight to the microphone and announced the great news and all the praises and thanksgivings from the congregation went straight up to the roof, shooting up to the heavens and I believed even the heavens could hear our exhilarating voices. That evening, there were many breakthroughs and healing and countless were those slain under the power of the Holy Spirit.

On the next day, 27th of November, when all of us entered the ballroom, all the children and families were very excited after a sumptuous breakfast. All were overwhelmed at the incredible space and provision that God has blessed His people with as our hearts knitted together for an awesome time with the Lord throughout the camp. And what was most amazing was that the space provided for us was free-of-charge!!!

The Bible says in Romans 8:37, "Yet amid all these things we are more than conquerors and gain a surpassing victory through Jesus who loved us." What we asked for, God gave us more

than enough! During the service, the congregation was running round the ballroom with banners and there were great joy and shouts of victory.

Children were falling under the power of the Holy Spirit and we have a grandmother who had encounter with the Lord. My daughter, Cadence, less than 2 years old could wave the banners during the worship and that got many adults and children excited. What was more surprising was that she could use either hand to wave it without the banners entangled. Teenagers and adults, young and old, weak and strong, all were captivated by the Presence of the Lord and God's fire on them. Even the worship leader and his musicians fell and were totally slain flat on the sanctuary.

My wife, Carrine also submitted to the Holy Spirit and was fully touched and moved by the presence of God. There were also cries and laughter by God's people in the midst of ministering by our Senior Pastor and Prophetess, Rev. Alicia Teo. The message preached was on the menorah that God (Exodus 25:31) wants us to light up in our spirit.

Many of us are stuck in the rut because of our sins against God and this had caused our spiritual pipe lines (Zech 4:2) to be clogged which has hindered us to experience the true anointing and blessing from God in our lives. In this retreat, we were set free by Jesus and all our seven lamps were cleared in preparation to receive the oil from God.

During the evening service, when the anointing came so strong, all the worshippers were running to catch the Fire of God through our Senior Pastor. Seeing this, our own TCC Singapore music director Jeffery went forward to catch them. All these happened so fast that I couldn't explain. It seems like a whirlwind wave from God fanning His flames towards His servants (2 Tim 1:6). But little did I expect that as I ran to the altar try to catch Jeffrey who was falling down under the anointing, I too was slain by the spirit and fell on the ground motionless and soaking in His Presence, not knowing what has happened.

And when I tried to come up, my body just wasn't strong enough. I knew it was time to submit to the Holy Spirit and let Him guide me through this spiritual experience. I was eager to see what God wants to show me. Over the next moment, I could still vividly remember seeing a man looking over a mountain and there was a huge land ahead of him. It's like a land flowing with milk and honey. The air was refreshing and the scent of great inspiration was bestowed upon the entire environment. It felt like a great hope, dream and vision. The next thing as I looked upwards, suddenly there was a bright light projecting down with its circumference of its ray surrounding me and the area. Something in the light flew and came down.

And when I looked closely, it was a dove flying down descending upon me. But this dove was special because it was bluish-white in colour. I have seen many doves in my life, but surely it

was not this colour. It came nearer and nearer to me. As I watched, it came upon my body and suddenly changed its shape into a bluish heart which penetrated into my heart.

When the whole experience ended, I found that I was still on the ground. But my body was fully at rest in God and relaxed. I soon began to find strength and bring myself up from the sanctuary floor. It was a remarkable encounter. In my heart, I knew it was a strong message God is showing me and doing a spiritual work on me. I didn't share this experience until the last day when many of us gave testimonies of the retreat. And when I shared the details of my experience, the congregation was truly overwhelmed and all of us offered our praises and glory to God Lord our Heavenly Father.

I am sure that with the 2 visions, God is also telling TCC Singapore that there is a great promise awaiting us to claim – God's inheritance and His land for the Church. There must be unity, peace and love to encircle and protect the families of God for it to grow. It must be like a well-watered garden. Only with a true willingness of our hearts; guided by the Holy Spirit can we fully take a step of faith to serve the Lord with fervency and to our best ability.

We need to fully use the gifts of the Holy Spirit to produce the Fruit of the spirit. Many of us until today still cherish the exciting and remarkable awesome encounter that happened during the retreat and it was a bus load of joy, peace, love and fulfilment when all of us set back to Singapore. In the dawn of 2013, members, friends and families were all asking when will be the next retreat and some even proposed to have two instead of one.

This year we will be holding it in November again because of the various activities lined up to June. We believe that more families will be joining us in the Next Retreat.

