

APRIL 2021

GRACE MONTHLY

"We love because He first loved us"

1 John 4:19



Growing With God

by Grace Cho

Having been on spring break for the past two weeks, I was reminded of how the world was just a year ago. At times, even the few sunny days feel exactly as it was during March of last year when COVID-19 unexpectedly hit the whole world. And as crazy as it may seem, we have already passed the one-year anniversary of gathering virtually for our Sunday Services and Friday Youth Nights.

With this, I have come to reflect on all of the weeks that I have typed in the Zoom meeting ID and password to join our weekly online meetings. My faith had hit a dreadfully long season where I felt numb and was unable to feel the presence of Christ in any circumstance. Moreso, I was simply looking at a screen for hours at a time and repeating the same routine every week. Although I am sure that many others have felt and are maybe still feeling this way right now, it was a detaching process in which I had alienated myself from God. As a result, I also began to unknowingly detach myself from the church community and the people who would have been able to help me overcome this dry season.

Thankfully, in the dry season, I was reminded of Isaiah 40:31 which says, "But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." Let us all meditate on this verse and allow the Holy Spirit to encourage us to reclaim our faith in Jesus Christ. It is of the utmost importance to fix our eyes on Christ as we continue in this season where we need to wear masks, use hand sanitizer and wait to get our vaccination, because I believe He will bring us through it. I urge us, Grace Youth, to **find confidence in Christ and rediscover His active work in your life**. He will not fail you and will always deliver strength to those who need it, even though at times it may be in the littlest of ways.

IN THIS ISSUE:

March Highlights

Praise Reports &
Prayer Requests

Upcoming Events for April

Praying with Scripture

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS

STUDENT DISCIPLESHIP RETREAT

From March 19th to 20th GEM Youth held their first Online SD Retreat through Zoom. The theme of the Retreat was "Unwavering Faith" and the main passage was Matthew 7:24-27. It started off with some icebreakers involving questions answered prior to the retreat such as, "Which Disney character best describes you?" Throughout the Retreat, students shared meals with their assigned groups and had times of personal meditation to quietly sit with God and listen for His voice.

There were 2 sessions during the Retreat, the first session was titled, "Faith and Doubt" which talked about how we can deal with doubt such that it will help us grow a steady faith in God. The second session was on "Active Faith" which talked about the anchors of our faith and how unwavering faith is formed from a growing understanding of our belief. There was also a group activity where each group read a different article on how Christians can defend our belief when questioned about the legitimacy of our religious belief. The retreat concluded with asking the question, "What do we ultimately want, do we seek the Truth? Or do we seek space from the Truth?"

Can I Trust the Bible?

Reasons For Believing

- Jesus did
- All the locations, archaeological sites found in the bible exist. Even if we did not believe the "spitball bible" even non-Christians believe in the "historical and archaeological bible"
- The Bible was recognized and accepted as authoritative by the community
- We have many reliable copies in the world such as time. The Bible is also a reliable copy that was handed down through generations.
- The case of the new and old testament being true was strongest where it mattered the most, Jesus
- This was Jesus' testimony -> the Bible is
- The time John wrote his gospel - allowing the time to be
- If you can read your Bible as well as you

Evidence For Believing

- New Testament, 5 75 Greek ancient manuscripts, 10 000 Latin manuscripts, - 1 000 000 quotations from early church fathers
- NT has the most ancient copies compared to other old manuscripts
- Archaeological Discoveries - the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947 confirms the accuracy of the Old Testament
- The construction of the Bible required a numerical system. In order for the copy to be perfect, if not the manuscripts were destroyed.
- New Testament, 99 percent reliable
- Old Testament 95 percent reliable
- archaeological confirmation of close parallels/events from the Old and New Testaments (ex. Pool of Siloam)
- New Testament is historically accurate (i.e. Luke who wrote Luke and Acts was a 1st eye-witness)
- oldest Old Testament manuscript, silver scroll from 7th century BC had part of Isaiah 52:1
- Even if one did not believe the "spiritual" aspect of
- A shepherd boy found 800 scrolls containing fragments from every book of the Old Testament except Esther upon a pottery shard in a cave.

Biblical Support For Believing

- Luke 1:1-4 "an orderly account"
- proverbs 30:5
- Bible is truly God's Word to us (2 Timothy 3:16-17) 2 Peter 1:20-21)
- "All scripture is breathed out by God..." - 2 Timothy 3:16
- Jesus affirming the writings in the New Testament, Matt 5:17-18, Luke 24:25-32, John 10:34-36
- "For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were"
- 2. Tim 3:16-17

Unwavering Faith

Ephesians 4:12-16

What helps us steady our faith?

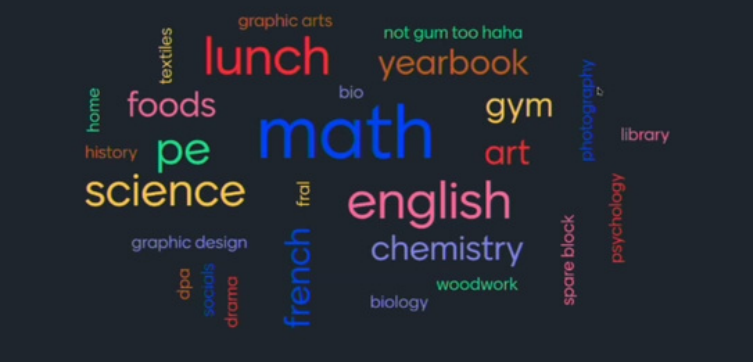
- Reasons** (understanding what we believe)
- Relationships** (not growing alone)
- Rhythms** (habits that are shaping us)



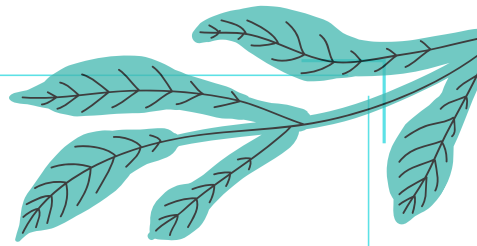
HIDDEN GEMS: LEADERS' HIGH SCHOOL DAYS

GEM Youth held their second Hidden GEMs podcast hosted by MCs Bosh and Jessie on Friday, March 26th. On this episode, students had the chance to learn more about their leaders by hearing some of their stories from their high school days. It included stories about their greatest achievements and biggest struggles. Throughout the event, the MCs took part in challenges which were suggested by the leaders. There were also some audience interaction using Mentimeter. Lastly, words of encouragement were given by our beloved leaders.

Overall, this podcast gave a great amount of comfort to the students, reminding each one of them that they aren't alone in whatever obstacle they face in their current school season of life.



Praise & Prayer



- **Pray** for the four students in our Grace Youth ministry who will be getting baptized and/or confirmed this year on Easter Sunday. Let's **pray** that as they declare their commitment to follow Jesus Christ, that they will build the sole foundation of their lives on Jesus Christ and His truth, so that they may be able to hold strong to Him with unwavering faith, no matter what season may come.
- **Praise** God for giving the students a restful spring break to not only rest physically, mentally, emotionally but also spiritually with Him. As they have now returned to school to resume their classes, **pray** that they will adapt back to the regular flow of school.
- As we have passed the one-year mark of living in the pandemic, many of us may feel tired or unmotivated. **Pray** that we as the church body will continue to lift and support each other, as well as our local communities. May our actions reflect the holiness of Christ. Let us also continue to give thanks to God for keeping us and our families safe from the dangers of the pandemic.
- Let's **praise** God for continuing to guide us through this restless season. **Praise** Him for continually revealing Himself through our pastors and providing us with accountable leaders who have been guiding us along the way.



UPCOMING EVENTS FOR APRIL

- Friday, Apr 2nd** Good Friday Family Service
- Sunday, Apr 4th** Grace Youth & ABLE Joint Easter Service
- Friday, Apr 16th** Friday Youth Night
- Friday, Apr 23rd** (CLAY) Special Event
- Friday, Apr 30th** Friday Youth Night

Events are subject to change. Make sure to keep up with our latest updates with your small group leader, on our website, Instagram, or Facebook!

Praying with Scripture

We asked the students, "What or who has been on your mind lately?" and to share any Bible verses that have helped them pray over that situation or individual.

Here are some of their responses below.

Use these verses to help you pray and be reminded of how God is present in your life. May you be strengthened by God's Word daily, trusting that He will hear and respond to your prayers.

What/Who's on our mind

- I've been thinking about my dad because he has been working 10 hours a day without at least a day off.

A Bible verse to help pray over this situation

Exodus 33:14: "And he said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

What/Who's on our mind

- **Asian hate crime.** In the US and many other countries, a lot of Asian people have been specifically targeted and hurt.
- Several friends, especially those who aren't close with Christ yet, but are on their path to get close to God.

A Bible verse to help pray over this situation

Romans 15:13 "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit"

What/Who's on our mind

- Lately, I've been thinking a lot about my old tutor because she has stage 4 lung cancer.
- About my future and job.
- I've been thinking about my church friends because many of us share the same concerns which is how will our future turn out. Although we're taught that God will always provide, we tend to forget that and worry about our future.

A Bible verse to help pray over this situation

Isaiah 41:10: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

What/Who's on our mind

- The people that have been on my mind for days are my family members because I don't want them to get infected by COVID and I want them to be healthy.

A Bible verse to help pray over this situation

Psalm 27:12: "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?"

What/Who's on our mind

- Some people I have been thinking about are my small group members as I have not seen many of them since going online for church services. I would love to know how they are doing, what they have been up to, and just catch up with them. Reaching out is definitely something I have wanted to do, but always thought that maybe they don't want to be reached out to and never really had the chance to do so.
- My relationships - past, broken, maintaining, and new relationships - I've just been struggling with seeing God through my relationships, and how I can be like Christ to those around me, as well as even wondering if maybe I should put more distance in some relationships that I've been struggling with.

A Bible verse to help pray over this situation

Hebrews 10:24-25: "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."