

APRIL 2023

GRACE MONTHLY

"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you."

John 16:18



Out of This World

by Hayeon Lee

Through the season of Lent and Easter, I've tried to read and meditate more on God's Word. Though there were a lot of verses that stood out to me these past few weeks, John 15:18-19 was on my heart for a while: "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." When we see what goes on in the world around us, there is always the question of, "If God loves us and cares for us, then why does He allow hardships and suffering?" I've always thought it is because we have something to learn, and God has a lesson to teach. However, I was still left with some questions since some hardships were brought to the most undeserving people. As I was reading this verse it felt like I have found the answer to my question.

This verse talks about how the world hates us because God has chosen us out of the world. I feel less fearful of what others will think, say, and judge after reading this. Since **we are not of the world but are chosen out of the world by God**, I feel so calm in the presence of God. Therefore, I pray for everyone to not be ashamed but to be proud in the fact that God has chosen us and called us to live as followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus has died for us and washed our sins for us to live a renewed life. I wish that this Easter was a time to truly feel the goodness of the Lord and to thank and praise Him for what He has done for us.

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MARCH HIGHLIGHTS

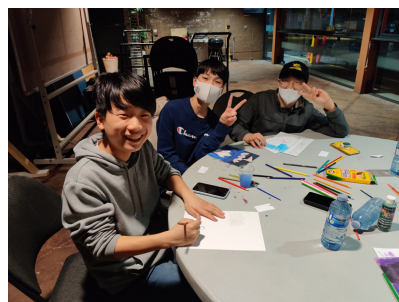
STUDENT DISCIPLESHIP RETREATS

From March 22 to 24, GEM Youth had their student discipleship retreat with the theme "Growing Strong" based on Job 23:10. There were various sessions and activities that led to the question of having spiritual doubts. During the sessions, the students discussed about their doubts, some ways to deal with them, and why we should wrestle with them. Then, they had time to share some of their spiritual doubts and get anonymous responses from their peers.

The students grew a more profound relationship as they comforted and prayed for one another. Through the retreat, the students learned that doubting is a natural part of the spiritual journey and that wrestling well with our doubts will refine our faith to become stronger.



CLAY Youth discipleship also had their retreat and was based on a theme titled, "Breath of God." They did an activity to discover their spiritual gifts and how it relates to their God-given calling for their life. Through worship, prayer, and other activities students encountered God in new ways and had an opportunity to build unity with one another.



"SHOW ME THE MIRACLE"



We all have unique God-given talents and gifts that can oftentimes be easily forgotten in our busy world. So for one night, as a way to showcase our individual talents, GEM held a Creative Arts Night on March 31st where they made artwork, created and performed skits, played songs, and had rap battles. This gave students an opportunity to not only express themselves creatively, but to work together and really connect with one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. Our God is creative, and as we are made in His image, we are too!



Praise & Prayer

- **Praise** God for providing the discipleship students with a wonderful time at their retreat! **Pray** that as they go on from their time of rest and reconnection that they will be able to continue to serve and grow closer to God and their peers!
- **Pray** for those who got baptized and confirmed, that God will continue working through and for them. Also, **praise** Him for giving these students the heart to devote their lives to follow Him.
- **Praise** God for giving us our leaders and pastors, so that they can help us know Him better. **Pray** that God will speak through them and that they will be blessed with strength and wisdom.
- **Praise** God for His Son Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection! **Praise** that we are forgiven and redeemed by Christ, able to live a life with God!
- **Pray** for the grade 12 students who are receiving their letters from universities! Let us **pray** that God will give them reassurance of their futures and strength to finish high school strong!

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR APRIL

Friday, Apr 7th No FYN (Good Friday Service)

Friday, Apr 14th Friday Youth Night

Friday, Apr 21th Praise & Prayer Night

Friday, Apr 28th 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, or Instagram!