

FEBRUARY 2021

GRACE MONTHLY

"But from there you will seek the Lord your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul."

Deuteronomy 4:29



God, Do Something

by Bessie Lee

I don't think any of us would disagree that the Israelites went through a lot – for hundreds of years they were oppressed as slaves in Egypt, and then they had to travel 40 years in the wilderness and battle nations far stronger than themselves in order to finally arrive at the land that God had promised to give to them. Once God's promise for them had been fulfilled, they had thought that they were good and secure for the rest of their lives. In fact, they experience many years of prosperity and peace under the rulership of David and Solomon. However, after many years they eventually end up being driven out of the very land that God had promised them for the same reasons that the nations before them had been driven out – for their wickedness and unfaithfulness to God.

Perhaps, although not to the same extent, in this trying season, we can closely relate to how the exiles felt when they had lost their nation and became a scattered people. While they were living in the good land, they often became focused on the prosperous situation they were in "now", glorifying in all of their abundant material possessions. Unfortunately, once all of those things were taken away and they were forced to live under captivity, they started mourning and reminiscing on what they had in the past, unable to gain a hopeful perspective regarding their future. In short, they forgot about God and fell into despair.

Grace Youth, I know – we're all tired. We're weary. Nothing excites us anymore. We feel like we've been driven into a "foreign land" where we are not free to live the way we are used to. Some of us have stopped caring about the virus altogether. More dangerously...
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JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

NO LONGER THE SAME

On January 22nd, GEM Youth had their first Friday Youth Night of 2021. To start the new year, the students and leaders focused on finding a new identity in Jesus Christ. They learned about how Jesus had changed his 12 disciples' lives, and how He wants to change our lives. By reading and reflecting on some Bible passages, they learned about what we should do as Christians to change in Jesus Christ. Everyone also had some time to share what has changed in their lives after meeting Jesus. "The old life is gone; a new life had begun!" (2 Corinthians 5:17) Through Jesus Christ, we are hoping that Grace Youth will discover their new identity in 2021!

THE GAME OF LIFE

CLAY Youth met on Friday, January 29th for an event themed, "The Game of Life". For this night, they played a game which made them think about their life. The goal was to have the students dream about their future by reflecting on their various life experiences.

40-DAY EARLY MORNING PRAYER

Starting on December 7th, 2020 GCC began a 40-day early morning prayer journey to specifically pray for the future of the church. From January 11-15th, the focus was on praying for the Education Ministry. These were the prayer items that children and students were asked to pray:


- God, may we truly listen and follow You, falling before You in prayer and worship as we seek Your will. Give us eyes to see and ears to hear.
- God, give us a heart that intentionally seeks after You.. Help us to abide in Jesus each day.
- God, give us a pure heart that we can resist temptation to sin. Give us wise and discerning hearts, and help us keep our eyes fixed on You.
- God, lead us to meet good people in our life, building relationships that will lead us to Jesus. May our leaders and parents be good spiritual leaders and role models for us.
- God, renew our minds and make us new. Help us to follow after Your voice and not the world's.
- God, who breathes out the breath of life, make us come alive in You. May we become an exceedingly great army of God's light.

(continued from cover page) ...we have become quite comfortable being in this state of despair. To all of you who can relate to any of these feelings, hear me say this loudly and boldly: we must wake up. As people of God, we are not meant to be driven by despair, but by the life-giving hope in Jesus Christ. Our suffering right now is a piece of dust compared to all the ways that God has blessed us in the past, and the future blessings He will grant us in eternity. We must stay vigilant and hear the words of God, who says, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13) God is not always going to show up when we feel like He should. Sometimes, we will find Him only when we actively seek Him out – with all our heart and all our soul. He wants to see that we really want Him to do something about the miserable state we're in. He wants us to cry out and search for Him, with all our heart. Are we willing to do that? Are we willing to cry out to God and seek Him with our whole heart? Are we desperate to find Him? Let us courageously take a step out of our despair to shout out our cries of hope to God. For what might happen when we do? Like the faithful ones in Scripture, I believe we will get to see God show up and do something unexpectedly amazing.





Praise & Prayer

- **Praise** God for blessing us with the technology to make online gatherings possible and continue worshipping Him together. Let's **pray** together that in this season of hardship we will continue to persevere and remain strong.
 - **Praise** God for providing us with leaders who give their time to walk alongside us in our walk with God during such an unexpected and seemingly discouraging season. Although continual Zoom meetings, one after another, may be mentally exhausting at times, **pray** that God will help keep our eyes fixed on Him and continue to deepen our faith.
 - **Praise** God that a vaccine has now been approved for COVID-19. It will take a long time for youth students and adults to receive the vaccine as elders and frontline workers are first in line. Until that day arrives for youth, please **pray** that God will continue to keep us all healthy. **Pray** also that God will help us make wise decisions that do not risk the health of others during this pandemic.
 - **Praise** God for always watching over our loved ones, despite the current circumstances that we find ourselves in. Let us **pray** that no matter what happens, that our trust will remain in Him always.
 - Many of us are following the new quarter system at school, in which we are required to learn two full courses during a short time period of 10 weeks compared to the typical four months. Please lift our brothers and sisters up with the prayer that they may rely even more on God during this time. **Pray** that they will ask for His guidance and seek His rest during this rather stressful season.
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UPCOMING EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY

Friday, Feb 5th (GEM) "Hidden GEMs"

Friday, Feb 12th (CLAY & GEM) Student Discipleship

Friday, Feb 19th (CLAY) Student Discipleship

Friday, Feb 26th (CLAY & GEM) Student Discipleship

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!

Speak, Lord, for Your Servant is Listening

Praying for the Future of GCC

Recently, our church has been given the opportunity to seek God's vision for the future of our church community. To seek for the Lord's guidance, our church has been praying together for 40 days with the theme, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." (1 Samuel 3:9) In light of this opportunity, we have been praying that (1) our church may become a **spiritual home for all generations**, (2) that God may provide **a place for the next generation of leaders to grow in Christ**, (3) that we would build a thriving **English-speaking ministry** and, finally, (4) that our church may remain devoted to **missions and evangelism**, transforming the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

As youth, how should we pray in light of the future?

First, we need to pray humbly in seeking God's will. At times, our pride can hinder us from seeking God. We must remember that all things are ultimately controlled by God and God alone. With each new opportunity, let us pray that we would continue to seek His guidance.

Second, pray that we may see His new works and hear His voice. Discovering God's new work in our lives requires our utmost attention as His soft whisper is easily drowned out by the noisy distractions of the world. Let us pray that as we encounter new things, we may pay attention to His voice and discover the new and amazing things that He is working out in our lives.

Third, let us pray that God will give us pure hearts to resist sinful temptations.

As young people, it isn't easy to resist sinful temptations and keep our eyes fixed on God. We need faithful peers and mentors who can hold us accountable for our faith life, so that we will remain focused on God. Pray also that God may provide good people in our life who will draw us closer to Jesus.

Fourth, pray that we may live with joy and gratitude for God's gift of life, work, and rest. We sometimes chase after meaningless things of this world. We aim to earn good grades, enter into a successful career, and the list goes on. These are good things, but they are not the ultimate thing. May we live a life full of joy and gratitude for God, His Kingdom, and with the gifts that He has provided us.

Lastly, pray that we may see things as God sees them. Pray that His love will lead us to love one another, and that we will willingly commit and sacrifice ourselves for the body of Christ so that He may fulfill His plans for our church community.