



Lively Stones | PETER 2:5

Holding forth the word of life

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CHRIST THE SUPREME HEAD OF THE HOME

(A Devotional Article on the Headship of Christ in the Family)

INTRODUCTION

Four years ago when we were just married, my wife Chin Ping and I bought a nice family-tree picture frame with three slots for family photographs. And right in the middle of these slots were the following words written prominently in the middle, "*Christ is the Head of this House.*"

Originally, we had wanted to put our wedding photo on it, together with the photos of our children in time to come. But unfortunately, both of us were later so caught up with our work and family commitments that we soon clean forgot about it. Today, if you visit my family, you will see that the picture frame still stands prominently on our Hi-Fi speaker in the living room, but it's still empty, largely neglected, and the words "*Christ is the Head of this House*" are covered with a thin layer of dust.

Now, to some extent, does this not remind us of the spiritual state within many Christian families today, including ours as well? After hanging up a wooden plaque with the following words "*Christ is the Head of our Home*" inscribed on it, we get so caught with the affairs of life that Christ is often ignored or forgotten in our homes. And when we do remember Him once in a while, we don't really understand what it means for Him to be the Head of our house in practical terms.

CHRIST'S AUTHORITY OVER THE CHURCH AND THE HOME

Now, in order for us to answer this question, it is important for us to understand, first of all, the nature of Christ's authority over the Church as Her Supreme Head.

Unlike some secular head of states who are nothing more than a figurehead in their respectively countries

e.g. the Queen of England, the Scripture tells us plainly that Christ is not merely an Advisor whom the Church turns to for advise without feeling obligated to obey wholehearted, neither is He sitting passively by the wayside while the ministers decide the affairs of the Church on their own.

Christ IS the Head over the Church, not only as Her originating Head (cf. Col 1:18), but also as Her legislative Head, meaning to say that He actually rules the Church through His ministers, and expects Her to submit under the authority and demands of His Word (cf. Eph 5:24).

We get so caught with the affairs of life that Christ is often ignored or forgotten in our homes. And when we do remember Him once in a while, we don't really understand what it means for Him to be the Head of our house in practical terms.

Now, since the local Church is basically made up of various family units (and individuals as well), this naturally implies that Christ's authority is also applicable to the Christian Family. While the husband is the immediate head of the house as we read in Ephesians 5, Christ is the Supreme Head who alone demands the absolute and cheerful obedience of the entire family. His will alone overrules every decision within the family.

THE PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DOCTRINE

With this crucial understanding in mind, we can now talk about the important practical implications of the

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Sunday School Promotion—Junior Department

"A loud shout was heard! There was a voice that boomed followed by trumpets and all around dead bodies I could recognise rose from the ground. I could remember the faces of some of these to be those who have told me they trusted in Christ. The, I also rose towards the clouds and as I looked down, some of the children I had taught in Sunday School did not rise up with the rest of us but stayed behind. This must be the rapture! But how come some of the children are left behind?"

This is a scene from 1 Thess 4:16-17 and it will happen one day.

One year passed is another year closer to the Lord's return.

Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me more then these? He saith unto him, Yea Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs." John 21:15

The passage in 1 Thess 4: 16-17 is in my personal opinion a double-edged sword. It is comforting to born-again believers who know Christ and have a personal walk with Christ. However, it strikes fear in unbelieving churchgoers as well as born-again parents of children who grow up in church. It certainly strikes a fear, as I have most recently become a father myself. Will our children go to heaven with their born-again believing parents? Parents have the utmost duty to share the gospel and bear a good testimony towards their children and to win them over to Christ. It comes with tears, hard work and hours on the knee, praying for their children. To help all of us in this great work, the Sunday school plays a very important role. No matter how successful our missions or foreign Vacation Bible School (VBS) are, if our church's future generations are not well-grounded in heart and head knowledge of God's Word, it will not be long before our church will turn apostate and cold. That is the reason why I want to continue to serve in our church Sunday school, it is the future for all foreign missions or VBSs to survive.

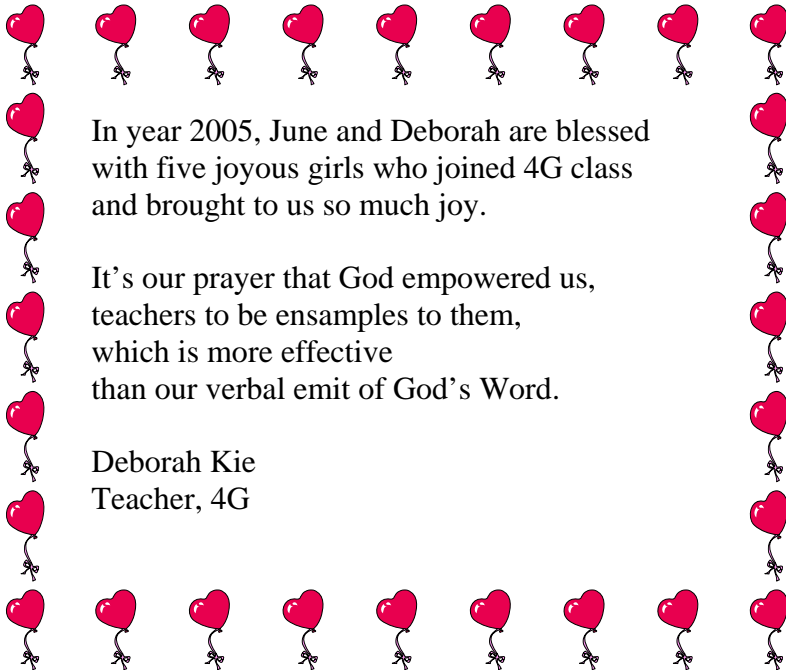
In the year 2004, the Junior Department has identified the salvation of our Sunday school students as the objective and priority of our lessons. We have met and discussed extensively the way we teach, the syllabus and concluded that the amount of juice in the lessons could be reduced so that the children can absorb more easily and emphasise on what it means to believe in Christ, the life changing aspects knowing Christ brings and leading the children to be assured of their salvation. We have also ensured that the same teacher teaching the Primary six classes to follow through to Secondary One class in Teens Department as the children are already experiencing great changes moving into from Primary School into secondary school.

What can you do as a parent? Bring your children to Sunday school so that we can help you teach your children. Look around and if your friend's children are not attending Sunday school, encourage them to.

If we all do our part, I trust the Lord that He will be faithful to bless and the scenario in 1 Thess 4:16-17 can become very different.

in Christ
Timothy Soh Eng Teck
Junior Department Superintendent

Sunday School Promotion—Junior Department



In year 2005, June and Deborah are blessed with five joyous girls who joined 4G class and brought to us so much joy.

It's our prayer that God empowered us, teachers to be ensamples to them, which is more effective than our verbal emit of God's Word.

Deborah Kie
Teacher, 4G

It has taught me to love Jesus. It has also made me a whole new person. – Charmaine Leong, Pr 4G

I like to attend Sunday School classes because it helps me to know more about God and grow in my spiritual life. And I thank God for Christian Friends. – Esther Toh

Thank God that I have been able to learn God's Word in greater detail before teaching the primary four girls, namely Eunice Huang, Lee Shu En, Charmaine Leong, Esther Toh and Rebecca Yee. The chattiness, unpretentious and simplicity of these girls have helped me reminisce the carefree days of yesteryears. More importantly, they are so privileged to have known the Lord Jesus Christ at a much younger age than I did.

Even with these girls' familiarity with repeatedly told Bible stories over the years, it is always exciting teaching them as both Deborah Kie (co-teacher) and I come up with different styles to teach them vis-à-vis dramatizing the scene, taking turns to read and attempt interpretation, sharing past experiences and encouraging them about real life application.

Although this has only been a short stint of barely three months, it seems that I have already known them for years. Praise God for their openness and eagerness to participate despite many wrong answers, especially relating to doctrinal issues. For example, I asked, "Why did Jesus come as a baby?" and their response was "because babies are cute"!

Pray that we will not only share the Bible stories but that we will be able to imbibe biblical truths to them so that they will truly grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and not merely head knowledge but to love the Lord with all their heart, and will all their soul, and with all their mind (Matt 22:37).

Deborah and I hope that by the end of 2005, we can add up to their profile that Eunice, Shu En, Charmaine, Esther and Rebecca will indeed know Whom they have believed... and hold fast the form of sound words, In faith and love which is in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 1:12-13).

June Lim
Teacher, 4G



Sunday School Promotion—Junior Department

I enjoy Sunday School cause all the lessons are very interesting. My Sunday School teacher makes sure we understand the lesson. I learnt a lot about the Bible. I also learnt that Jesus is the only way to Heaven. I've grown to know Jesus spiritually. I have also learnt to read more of the Bible. I prefer a small class cause I get more attention from my teacher, Auntie Evelyn and I can voice out my feelings and questions.—SS Student



I enjoy Sunday School. The lessons are made more interesting by cutting out every picture from the guidebook. I had learnt to love my neighbour by helping them when they are in need. Having a smaller class allows us to less distracted and has more interactions. I feel that I have grown spiritually and would like to serve God cheerfully, faithfully and to the best of my ability and to seek to realise at all times the objective of our church for this year – Be a Witness unto the Lord. – Melissa Raye

I used to dislike Sunday School and refused to do my homework, but now I enjoy coming to class and have been doing my work regularly. I have learnt a lot in Sunday School, to love our enemies and to love our neighbour as thyself. Now, I flip the Bible easier and know the Bible better. I thank God for giving me a good teacher to teach me spiritually and grow to be a good disciple of God.— SS Student



I like Sunday School because the stories are very interesting and I learn how to love my sister and neighbours. I learn more in a smaller class and all of us can take turns to read the Bible and it is better to have an all girls' class. I enjoy looking at the pictures of the story. And I thank God for giving us a very good class. – Abigail Yeap



Sunday School is fun because we can learn a lot from the BIBLE and the stories told are nice and interesting. Sunday School is nice to come too. Learning about God is fun too. I have only been here for about two years and I have learnt many things from the Bible. – Nadia Ongkowiedjaja, Pr 6



I like to come to Sunday School because I can learn more about God. – Samuel, Pr 6

I like to go to Sunday School because it teaches me the Lord's Word and helps me to be a better person. – Anthony Lee, Pr 6

I enjoy Sunday School. I always look forward to go to Sunday School every Sunday because we are taught until we really understood. I also learn to love my neighbour when they are in need. The Sunday School teaches me morals and more about Jesus. I have grown to learn more about Jesus. – Lynn Xue

Sunday School Promotion—Junior Department

Sunday School is a place to learn about God. I like Sunday School because there are many things I can learn about like, the “Sermon on the Mount” and many others. I can learn more about God and increase my knowledge about knowing Him more by going to Sunday School. – Rachel Tan, Pr 6

I like Sunday School mainly because I can learn more of the Bible. Bible stories are interesting and have a lesson to be learnt behind them, which we may need to refer to later on in life. It is the same with memory verses. I can have fellowship with my classmates. It is always good to have Christian friends. Of course, I go to church to spend more time with God. We should never forget God and His goodness to us. He loved us so much He sent His Son to die on the cross for us. That is why we ought to put God above all things. – Elizabeth Tan, Pr 6



Sunday School has taught me how to be a good Christian. – Joel, Pr 6

I have learned more about Jesus and I trust and obey Him. – Gideon, Pr 6

Sunday School lets me learn more about God. The most important thing is that we must trust and believe in God. – Joseph Chan, Pr 6

I enjoy Sunday School because I can learn more about the Bible in an interesting way. Although I have heard some of the stories before, I can hear and understand it in a different way. This way, I can know more about God and the Bible. – Faith Tan, Pr 6

Ever since I was born, I have been baptized and brought up in church. I like church because I can learn more about God, Jesus Christ, and the Bible. Celebrations etc are fun-bonding sessions for all of us. I hope by the end of the year I may continue to grow in faith of our Lord Jesus Christ! As each Sunday goes by, I look back into the past week and wonder, “did I do what was right in the eyes of God?” And the next week after that Sunday, I would constantly remind myself in whatever I do, God comes first. – Lee Shu Yi, Pr 6

I come to church every week to learn more about God’s Word. The Bible stories are very interesting and contain lessons for us to learn. – Tabitha Lee, Pr 6

Personally, I feel that Sunday School is useful as it was partly through it I discovered and re-examined my faith in God. I really enjoy it and I really am able to learn valuable lessons and values of a Christian. – Sarah Cheung, Pr 6

I enjoy Sunday School very much as I can learn more about God’s Word. I hope by the end of the year, I would be strong in faith. – Jamie Kok, Pr 6

I enjoy Sunday School because I can learn more about God’s Word. I hope that by the end of the year, I can grow in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is also a lot of fun during Sunday School and at the same time, earnestly trying to gain doctrines from the Bible. I also memorise verses from the Word of God that can lead me through and give me comfort when I meet difficulties in life. – Magdalene Huang, Pr 6

I have learnt many things that I did not know before in Sunday School. One of the most important things that I’ve learnt is that Jesus died on the cross for our sins. – Janene, Pr 6G

CHRIST THE SUPREME HEAD OF THE HOME

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doctrine. Since space will not permit me to list them exhaustively, I will mention just two of them.

The Family Must be Governed by His Word

The first implication has to do with Obedience. In other words, while we may own Christ as the Supreme Head of our family, do we really obey Him at home? Does the Word of Christ govern every affair within the family, regardless of how insignificant it may be in our sight?

As I ponder over these questions, one of the areas that immediately comes into my mind is the catechizing or religious instructions of our own children at home. Now, the Scripture makes it abundantly clear that the awesome responsibility of instructing our children in the ways of the Lord, through catechizing and by our own examples, rests squarely upon our shoulders as parents, period (cf. Deut 4:9-10, 6:4-7). It is crucial for us to understand that no matter how well equipped or trained our Sunday School teachers may be, they are only here to play a supportive role, and not to replace us.

But if we, for one reason or another, disregard the laws of Christ by abrogating our God-given responsibility towards our children at home, then it is utterly meaningless for us to claim Him as the supreme Head in our home.

The Family Must Seek the Lord through Prayer and the Word

Besides catechizing our children, another important practical implication has to do with setting aside time regularly to seek the mind of Christ through prayer and the diligent study of the Word.

Now, I suppose this should be obvious to many of us since a family who own Christ as its Supreme Head must be governed by His will, and there is no way whereby we can positively know His will except through sincere prayer and the diligent study of His written Word.

But despite of this, how many Christian families today actually set aside time apart from their daily work or family commitments to seek Him through these means of grace? In times of peace, do we as parents set aside time regularly to draw close to Him, so that we may constantly attune ourselves spiritually to the mind of Christ? And in times of trouble, or when difficult decisions must be made,

do we, as a family, come before Him to seek His guidance and will?

If we do not seek the Lord regularly in our homes, how then can we claim to know His will for our families? Are we not in effect mocking God by actually doing our own will rather than the will of Christ in our homes?

CONCLUSION

Dear Brethren, be not like the soldiers who bowed their knee before the Lord in His final hours and cried 'Hail, King of the Jews', for they proclaimed him as a King with their mouths but sought to mock him with their crown of thorns.

As His dear children, let us bow genuinely before the Lord as the Supreme Head of our homes, always striving to know and to obey His will for our families, for this is good and reasonable in His sight. Amen.

Preacher Calvin Loh

Announcements

Today is the Junior Department Promotional Sunday.

There is NO Sunday School today.

The Editorial team welcomes contribution from the congregation. Please send contributions to kohjulia@starhub.net.sg. The editorial team reserves the right to edit any articles to be published.

**Editorial Team:
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Mrs Selina Lee**