

Ben Chong - President

Vision – Thriving As A Community

God has placed a desire in my heart to see His creation living as he created them to be, or in other words, to thrive. This is achieved when we are fulfilling the purpose that God has put us here on earth for. On a human level, Spurgeon (bible commentator) says that a “man’s chief end is to glorify God (1 Cor 10:31) and enjoy him forever (Psalm 73:25-26)”. How each of us glorifies God in our lives differs from one another because God has made us differently and placed us in different circumstances.

To thrive is to understand the gospel and what God has, is and will be doing in the world.

God is concerned about redeeming this world from its current sinful state to its original perfect state. This redemption is for all of God’s creation people, nature, animals, and further extends to the interactions across these groups, and also with God.

Living in Freedom

We can only thrive when we are living as we were created to. To understand this we look back at God’s creation of man. Adam and Eve were made in God’s image, brought to life with God’s own breath and declared to be good. Our journey in freedom culminates in the restoration of that unique, good being God created.

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.” Romans 8:1-2

We have a new position in Christ when we surrender our lives to Christ, one of victory and freedom over sin. We have spent a year reflecting on our fears and holding on to God’s promises to as a source of strength to rise above them. In Christ we can make sense of our identity.

Building for the Kingdom

One of our purposes, as people whose identity is IN Christ, is to build God’s kingdom here on earth.

To thrive is to engage in this purpose.

God is the all-powerful creator and He builds His own kingdom. However, He chooses to accomplish this work through the humans whom He created in His image – us. God intends for His nature to be reflected through us into this world despite its brokenness.

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

1 Corinthians 15:58

In the light of God’s kingdom, nothing we do now is in vain. The work that we do now is meaningful because it is fully restored when God’s kingdom is established.

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Building Community

Our work here on earth also centers around the command that Jesus leaves us:

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20

Hence, we thrive as a community when we go and use the resources that God has given us to bring the gospel to those who have not heard it.

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works” Hebrews 10:24

The outward move to share the gospel has to be balanced with inward investment to build community, where we meet to encourage one another towards the fulfillment of our purpose.

Given

CCF has given me community to grow alongside through these 3 years. When I first joined in first year, I was having a tough time adjusting to life in Toronto. Freezer became a time where I found a lot of comfort rooted in the familiar Chinese culture that I had missed from home (Singapore). Over the years attending large group and worship ministry has been an outlet that God has used to grow my understanding of the gospel, the way I interpret the bible and my understanding of community.

Two other experiences, other than being part of CCF, largely account for the growth of my gifts. Being a cadet in the military humbled me and taught me to serve and persevere. Eventually I also was assigned leadership opportunities where I could grow in influence, resource management and communication. Serving in church as a worship leader grew my relationship with God based on the idea that man was created to worship God, while serving as a youth group leader grew my faith as I witnessed God working in the church.

Goals

- 1) Grow in our understanding of the gospel
- 2) Grow in understanding of the part we have to play in kingdom building
- 3) Engage in kingdom building at an individual and communal level
- 4) Engage in outreach activities