

lose our objectivity and theological compass. We've seen it happening all the time – Christians naively promoting modern day prophets from overseas without checking their backgrounds or credentials, only to discover to their regret that they were actually charlatans out to make a quick buck.

But Nathanael was more cynical of the place Nazareth than concerned for his friends' evaluative ability and spiritual well-being. He was actually prejudiced against that town. From his statement, it appeared that everyone seemed to hold the view that nothing good could come from that place.

Every family and society has its expectations and prejudices. We expect people to fit into certain boxes and labels. So we categorise and typify them for convenient identification – unemployed, divorcee, homophobic, delinquent, fighter, recalcitrant and the like. Or we stereo-type certain places we don't like. Some people describe Johor Baru as a place of thugs, or Bangkok as a place of sleazy entertainment. While it is partially true that both places contain those undesirable elements, they're not wholly representative. But prejudices stick more readily than other compensatory aspects of reality. Nazareth was a victim of such a prejudice.

To his credit, Nathanael for some inexplicable reason decided to meet Jesus. That encounter shook him as it never did. Our Lord unexpectedly (at least in Nathanael's mind) said, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false" (John 1:47). Nathanael might carry a societal prejudice but at least, he spoke his mind. Our Lord didn't hold that against that man. Nathanael was amazed at the Lord's knowledge. So he asked, "How do you know me?" Jesus' answer was equally amazing, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you" (John 1:48).

Then another unexpected statement from the Messiah, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that." He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man" (John 1:50-51).

Nathanael would have understood the inference and reference. Jacob saw in his dream a ladder stretching from heaven to earth. The once schemer was later renamed Israel, which became the name of the nation. Our Lord looked beyond Nathanael's prejudices. Likewise he saw beyond Peter's impetuosity and Paul's self-righteousness. He sees beyond our weaknesses and prejudices because He will mould us after His likeness.

If God is so gracious, let's learn to set aside our prejudices and be open to others as people made in God's image. Don't let your prejudices keep you from accepting others – be it race, age, convictions, gender or appearance, and cause you to make conclusions about their character, intelligence, or abilities.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WELCOME all guests who have come to worship with us this morning. If this is your first visit, please fill in the Visitor Form so that we can keep in touch with you.



DO NOT FORGET TO SWITCH OFF YOUR HANDPHONES!

EVANGELISTIC OUTREACH SUNDAY

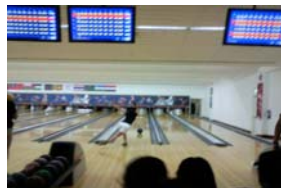
Next Sunday, being the 5th Sunday of the month, will be our Evangelistic Outreach service. Please invite friends and relatives to come and join us for a time of sharing the Word and fellowship. Lunch will be served after the service.

Pastor Neville will be speaking on the subject "By His Grace." Last week, he read an email sent to him by someone: "*Things are good because they will not last. They do become damaged, thus people will appreciate their worth while they last. With this in mind, why is everlasting life good?*" Pastor asked that we consider this.

FELLOWSHIP NEWS

Daniel Tan's Bowling Fellowship

Results:	Champion	Total Pinfalls
Team Champions	Men's Team	1243
Top Bowler:	John Tan	345
Ladies	Bernie (handicap)	319.8
	Youth	
	Bryan (handicap)	314.4



Trophies will be presented by Mrs Lilian Tan during lunch fellowship. The Bowling Fellowship was sponsored the family of our late Bro. Daniel Tan.

29th ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

We wish to thank all those who have contributed in one way or another, items, AV, logistics, food and other services, to make this event a wonderful time of testimony.

Check out our Church Anniversary photo album. Log on to: <http://churchofgodsg.phanfare.com/> Password "cog166b". If you have taken photos during our anniversary and you want them to be added to the album, please email them to chggod@churchofgodsg.com.



Top: Ladies Group below: B.K.'s group

PRAYER PAGE



1. **Please pray for our guest speaker, Rev. Timothy Khoo,** as he brings us God's Word this morning. Pray that we will all be responsive to God's word and to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

2. Pray for **Sis Lavinia, Br Henry Tan and Sis Swee Lian** as they lead us in worship, and the AV persons/ushers on duty.

3. The Pastors wish to thank all our **special guests** at our 29th Anniversary & Thanksgiving Service last Sunday, especially those who had come all the way from Penang and Johor Baru. They were very pleased that **Mrs Khoo Keh Hong**, wife of the late Rev. Henry Khoo, was able to grace the occasion with her presence and inspiring address. Please pray for God's continuing blessings for all our sisters and brothers in Christ.

4. We are thankful to the Lord for the good progress **Auntie Alice** is making. Her blood test result is good. Please continue to pray for God's peace and strength for her as well as for Auntie Catherine.

5. Continue to pray for the **Youths and Sunday School children**, that even in their youth they will love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. Pray that they will want to observe and do all the commandments of God. Please pray for the **Cell Groups**, that all the Leaders will seek the Lord's direction for their cell. Pray for God to put a burden on every church member to join a cell.

6. **Pray for Spiritual Growth.** Remember our theme for the year is to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col 3:16). Pray that we may be saturated in the Word and grow into the full measure of God so that "we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming" (Eph 4:14).

There never is a night or day when God can't hear us as we pray; There is no time, there is no place that we're beyond His love and grace.

PASTORAL PRAYER. Should you or someone you know need prayer, please speak to the pastor or send your email to chggod@churchofgodsg.com.

Memory Verse:

Last week's: How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings. - **Psalm 36 : 7**

This week: The days of the blameless are known to the LORD, and their inheritance will endure forever - **Psalm 37:18.**