

7th COMBINED YOUTH CONFERENCE

Theme: "I'mPure. Am I?"

(23 to 25 June 2011)

Conference Report by Jollyn Low



"I'mpure. Am I?" was the theme of this year's 7th Combined Youth Conference (CYC). What a thought-provoking pun which caused many of us to reflect on our walk as Christians. I praise the Lord for the attendance of about 60 youths from several like-minded churches from Singapore and Malaysia. The three-day-two-night Conference was indeed a fruitful one as we were blessed with spiritual feasting on God's Word, learning the various aspects of purity in a Christian's life.

I thank God for enabling Rev Dr Quek Suan Yew to speak to us on the theme as well as Bro Joseph Poon and Pr Ko Ling Kang who led us in the morning devotions. I would also like to thank God for enabling the Organising Committee to effectively plan the CYC and to compile such a user-friendly and informative conference booklet. The evangelistic article is an extremely useful guide especially in helping nervous or young Christians to efficiently share the gospel of salvation.

The Conference commenced with an ice-breaker led by Joan. In this game, each of us was given a piece of paper which has a box and a few lines on it. We had to draw a portrait of ourselves, list two distinct features of ourselves and write a prayer request. Thereafter, Joan collected the papers back from us, shuffled, and re-distributed to everyone. The objective was to find the owner of the paper based on the clues on it. It was an enjoyable time as many of the portraits look generic thus it was harder for us to look for the "owner" of the paper.

The opening message by Rev Quek was entitled "The mark of the believer" based on Matthew 5:1-12. We learnt that the beatitudes have a logical progression from the poor in spirit to the persecuted. This message caused us to question ourselves, "Do I have an insatiable thirst and hunger to obey God's Word?" as only born-again Christians have the passion to fulfil all the beatitudes.

The message was followed by group discussion. We shared our testimonies of faith and the trials and temptations we face as Christians. I was deeply encouraged to learn how others overcome the trials they face as Christians.

After the discussion and lunch, we watched a video show followed by discussion. The video was about the Christian character. I learnt that as Christians, we have to be mindful of the things we do as it reflects our character, which is an "*image of his person* (God)" (Heb 1:3), thus we are walking testimonies of our God.

Then, it was game time! The game led by Joan was a little race which consisted of three segments: Quotes, Marking and Matching. It was an ingenious way to enhance teamwork within the group. All of us definitely had a ball of a time rushing from one segment to the next and solving the questions.

Our last message for the first day was "Do you have a pure heart?". Rev Quek preached from 2 Timothy 2:22-26. We were taught the practical aspects of a believer's life. To have a pure heart, we have to follow righteousness, faith, charity and peace. In addition, a believer must be "*gentle unto all men*" and "*in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*" (2 Tim 2:24). This message was a good reminder to me to make it a constant effort to avoid strife and to strive to have a pure heart. During discussion time, we had a blessed time sharing how we overcome youthful lusts and strife. We were also reminded from 2 Timothy 2:24 that "*the servant of the Lord must not strive,*" thus we have to be "*swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath*" (James 1: 19).

At the end of the first day, we had a time of dorm fellowship. The boys' dorm had a getting-to-know-you session through games followed by a time of prayer. The girls' dorm had a sharing on the lessons that impressed us most. I was deeply encouraged by the girls' sharing.

The second day started with morning devotions led by Bro Joseph Poon. The message encouraged us to reflect on whether we have been worldly or are warriors for God. Do we follow the world blindly? Do we know that there is a spiritual battle going on in our lives? Oftentimes, we get so caught up with things of the

world that we forget that there is a spiritual battle and we drift away from following God single-mindedly. It was indeed a necessary reminder that we as Christians must not entangle ourselves with *“the affairs of this life”* so that we *“may please him (God) who hath chosen him (us) to be a soldier”* (2 Tim 2:4).

After our quiet-time and breakfast, Rev Quek delivered his message on “Do you have a pure conscience?” based on 1 Timothy 3:8-10. Conscience is a moral compass which differentiates good from evil. Even though the passage talks about elders and deacons, every believer should make these qualities his goals. To have a pure conscience, one must be grave, that is to have a good moral character. The second quality is not to be double-tongued as this may lead to strife among church members. Be it leaders or members of the church, we are to be peacemakers, preventing or removing animosities and not aggravating it. The third quality is not to be given to much wine. The world is a constant battlefield for our souls. We have to be sober, otherwise Satan will attack knowing that we are weak and vulnerable and unable to think logically. The last quality is not to be greedy of filthy lucre, but to remain steadfast to our Christian morals and ethics.

Shortly after, Rev Quek gave the second message for the day entitled “Do you have pure wisdom?”. Even though we are youths, we can acquire wisdom because wisdom does not only come with age. *“Let no man despise thy youth”* (1 Tim 4:12) was an apt reminder to us to pursue godly wisdom. I also learnt that with pure wisdom comes a peaceable and gentle countenance.

We then had an evangelism workshop conducted by Bro James. The interactive session the groups had on Luke 10:1-24 was extremely fruitful as I learnt how to approach others, and the attitude I should have when approaching unbelievers. We then headed out for a time of Practical Evangelism, in our various assigned locations in the neighbouring estates. I thank God for giving us the courage to approach strangers to share the gospel with them. After evangelism, we headed back to Calvary Pandan to share our experiences with the others and to pray for the unbelievers whom we spoke to.

The third message of the day was “Do you have a pure mind?”. Rev Quek spoke from 2 Peter 2:1-7. We learnt that purity of mind is essential as it is the gate to purity of heart, conscience and wisdom. Our spiritual minds are not to be in a state of coma, but we are to constantly *“stir up your (our) pure minds by way of remembrance”* (2 Pet 2:1). We have to remember the things said by the holy

prophets in the Old Testament and the commandments of the apostles in the New Testament. The message was then followed by group discussions.

The second day concluded with sharing of testimonies. We took turns to share how we have been blessed by God. It was without doubt a heart-warming session.

On the final day of the Conference, Pr Ko Ling Kang led the morning devotions on “Setting the Bar of Purity” based on Genesis 39. We learnt from the example set by Joseph. Joseph is an exemplary Christian because of his desire to be pure, his courage to stay away from the temptation he faced from Potiphar’s wife, his consciousness of the presence of God and his conviction to commit himself to do the right thing. We have to constantly place ourselves against the benchmark set by Joseph, pushing ourselves to purity so that we may please our Lord and Saviour with our lives of purity.

The last message was entitled “How to maintain a pure mind.” Rev Quek preached from Philippians 4:6-9. He emphasized that being pure in mind cannot be sporadic. There must be constant effort to maintain it. We can do so by seeking God’s help through prayer. In 1 Samuel 30:22-23, we see David committing the matter on hand straight away to God. We must also have the peace of God in us which will *“keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”* (Phil 4:7). Our thinking has to be kept pure by thinking *“whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report”* (Phil 4:8).

After the message, we had a Q-&-A session where our doubts were cleared. It was indeed an interactive session! We then broke up into groups to clean up the place, followed by our final lunch.

Even though this year’s CYC has ended and we are reluctant to face the world again, we have certainly learnt a lot on how to bear a testimony of purity before the world. May the Lord help us to continually check our “state of purity” with the valuable lessons we have learnt. Praise the Lord for this blessed Conference! We look forward to many more CYCs to come!

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(Photos of CYC 2011 are available for viewing at www.truthbpc.com.)