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# Timothian Times

## A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

- BY CECILIA PERH

**C**ontext is everything! A saucy joke at a party is great fun, evoking laughter, but when repeated at a funeral, will only evoke furrowed brows and thoughts of insensitivity.

Sensitivity is required! A hearty “good morning” to a cheerful person may elicit one in return, while a depressed person will probably either ignore you *and* your greeting.

The point I want to make is that unless you understand the context of a particular situation and are sensitive to the feelings and circumstances that those people are in, a helpful comment can be viewed negatively, a by-the-way remark can be blown into an important statement, etc.. Maturity, balance and giving people the benefit of the doubt until they can be given time to explain are *always* required. Ultimately, all things will be tested by God who alone can render a perfect judgment because He knows all things and He knows the hearts and motives of all involved in any particular issue. But that will only be on the Day of Judgment which is yet future.

How are we to proceed in our days? The answer for us now is to test all things by God’s plumb-line, the Word of God, for the Scriptures are very clear with respect to what is truth (pure, unadulterated truth) and what is error (truth mixed with human philosophy, traditions, and wisdom from below).

Jacob Prasch has made many statements about Alpha and the Purpose Driven Life which need to be explained in the light of what God’s Word says about it. He lives in the UK, a nation that has already seen the effects of more than 10 years of Alpha and he speaks with first-hand knowledge of the things that have happened there.

How then are we, in Singapore, to view his statements?

Let me begin by setting the context for us.

When the gospel first came to us in Singapore in the 1800s, it was already a “liberal” gospel, in the sense that when the “gospel” was presented, usually there was very little mention made of the need to carry your cross to follow Jesus, the need to die to self, the need to obey the Lord Jesus Christ plus the very real possibility of hostility and persecution by family members. Instead, what was held out was usually the promise of eternal life, healing, peace, mercy, grace... (which are all true and are all wonderful).

However the problem arises when these things are held out as “enticements” to “accept Jesus”. Who could resist such a good offer? *If* I can have Jesus and heaven still continue to live any which way I want, why not? It’s always good to have an egg in every religious basket, another insurance ticket to a good life after death. Why not “try” Jesus? As if He was like a product to be sold! Remember the “I Found It” campaign several years ago.

I myself came to “faith” under such a gospel and it was only about 10 years later that I was brought to a realization that Matthew 7:21-23 was true of me. Previous to that, I was trained to evangelize, to ask people this very significant question: “*Where would you be if you were to die tonight?*” and to give a very significant answer: “*I don’t know about you, but I know where I will be...in heaven!*” If I had died at any time before I truly came to faith in Christ in 1984, I would have ended up in hell instead! But God had mercy on me and brought me to Himself after a very traumatic and difficult time.

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It was only after I got involved in 1987 with Kay Arthur who wrote Precept Bible Studies that I began to understand what God meant by what He said. When Kay taught about the possibility of “Christians” not being born again, it was a novel concept to me. I never knew that the Bible taught that, for I was taught or it was implied that whenever one prayed the “Sinner’s Prayer”, one was saved, and whenever I had doubts about my salvation, I would be “reassured” of my salvation. When I asked how I could know I was born again, I was told that I would pray (I did that), I would do good works (I did that), I would give (I did that), I would serve the Lord (I did, in various ministries: Sunday School teacher, Youth leader, sang and led in the choir, evangelized, etc.), that I would read the Bible (read it through at least once and read several Christian books though I didn’t understand much then). Conclusion: I must be born again! But... the niggling doubt would come back time and again during those 10 years.

It was only after I was truly born again and had studied the Word of God inductively, and saw for myself what God had to say about this issue that I understood that I was never born again in those early ten years of my “Christian” life. I thought, and, I’m sure, many of my church family thought, that I had backslidden, then repented and was restored. The reality was I never was born again. The Scriptural evidence of a changed life that is patterned on our Lord’s was never there. Oh, I had changed no doubt about that, but not enough. It was merely putting on different clothes, adopting a different behaviour that was acceptable to church people, more like reformation rather than genuine transformation from the inside out.

I also learnt that a lot of the Bible teaches about HOW you can know that you’re truly born again and that one major emphasis, as expressed by 2 Peter 1:10, is to ensure that you know for yourself that you are truly God’s child, called and chosen by Him (see Matthew chapters 5-7, the whole books of James and First John, plus relevant portions in Paul’s Epistles and Peter’s, Scriptures concerning the New Covenant and many more).

Some students tell me that they got born again in my Romans classes; although they have been in the church several years (I can only speak of those who told me, there may be more). Because of the awful reality of Matthew 7:21-23 where our dear Lord said, “*Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord’ ... and...I will declare to them, ‘Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness’*”, I ensure that I always speak about this issue and give people Biblical ways of checking their own salvation every once in a while.

All this just to bring you to the point where you may understand the next statement I make with maturity and understanding.

Unless you have gone into God’s Word to know exactly what is the very gospel that our Lord Jesus and His apostles preached, anything that sounds like the “gospel” that you came to faith in, would sound very biblical, wouldn’t it?

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By the way, I hope you know that you can only measure what is out there by what is in here, i.e., in your mind. If you don’t know, you don’t know. We are not born with an instinctive understanding of truth, although all truly born-again believers are given the resident Truth Teacher inside who will guide them into all truth (see John 14:26; 16:13; 1 John 2:20) and one thing we need to keep on doing, is to keep on putting truth into our heads and hearts! Living it out ensures that truth gets from our heads into our hearts!

Line up whatever is said about the Gospel of Jesus Christ with what the Bible says about the Gospel of Jesus Christ and then make your judgment. The book of Romans would be one of the most excellent plumb-lines for the Gospel.

How then are we to respond practically to the use of things like Alpha, the Purpose Driven Life, the Passion, various Bible Study materials, etc..?

Scriptures are very clear that all believers are to submit to leadership, even to ungodly secular leadership (see Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-15). If that is so, how much more then should we submit to godly leadership in the church?

I take my cue from the writer of Hebrews who never criticized the weak leadership there, but filled in the gap for them. Those leaders were strong on good works rather than on the Good Word, so... he

wrote the wonderful epistle of Hebrews to help settle the major problems in that congregation. Note: I am sure you know that when leaders tell God’s people to sin against the Lord that *that* is the time when God’s people must take a stand against it (see for example, Acts 5:29).

What if your leaders insist that you use these aids as a tool for evangelism? After all, so many unbelievers have come and some have even come to faith in Christ. The physical numbers are there, the tangible results are very evident right now.

Your dilemma (for those who took Jacob’s words to heart) seems to be between choosing to go against God’s appointed authority structure or offending your Lord? Obeying your leaders and injuring your conscience or taking a stand and hope to be understood? Is there a way out?

My personal stance is this: I will always use the Bible. If my leaders decide to use things like those mentioned above, I will study and compare and see what is missing that needs to be put in, and put those things in and take out that which is unbiblical. Frankly, it does not matter to me what is being used, because anything that is used, *if* I am to lead and teach it, I will always cause to conform to what the Bible says. I trust that in this way, I can satisfy both my leaders and my Lord, obey them and still maintain a good conscience before the Lord. If I am not allowed to do so, then I must beg leave from them to not do something that my conscience is not clear about and trust that my leaders are godly enough to know that believers should never violate their conscience (see 1 Corinthians 8 and 10), and that they will graciously release me to do other things for the Lord that will build up His body.



## Jacob Prasch Teaching Conference 2004

Jacob Prasch's annual teaching conference was held between 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> July 2004. This year, God brought a bigger turnout than in previous years, for which we thank Him. The Lord is indeed drawing His people to a greater knowledge about Israel and the Church through Jacob's teaching which carries a heavy emphasis on the Jewish perspective of the Bible.



*Dinner with Jacob at Rosette off Kiliney Road.*

The committee is also thankful to Bukit Panjang Gospel Chapel, Glory Presbyterian Church and Hakka Methodist Church for hosting the teaching conference. If your church is interested in hosting future conferences, do drop us a note!



*The team having a "debriefing" session.*

*We also like to thank Joshua, Amanda, Irene, Ann and others for their effort in helping organize this year's teaching conference.*

If you missed the teaching sessions and would like to purchase the MP3 CDs of the topics covered during the 3-day conference, they will be made available soon! The MP3 CDs will cost S\$15 each. ☎ Contact us at [jacob@2Tim2-2.com](mailto:jacob@2Tim2-2.com)

More pictures at  
<http://community.webshots.com/user/jacobprasch04>

## Obadiah Workshop on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2004

Cecilia conducted a special Trainer's Workshop on the book of Obadiah over the National Day holiday. Despite the late call for participants and the fact that it was a public holiday, 29 people turned up for the 6-hour session held at Bukit Panjang Gospel Chapel.

Based on the book of Obadiah, the sole intention of the workshop was the training of current disciples and teachers of the Word to train others in the Inductive Bible Study method of studying the Bible. All this is in keeping with the motto of the ministry and the hope and expectation that the Lord will bring many to partner us in this endeavour.



*The Obadiah Workshop held during National Day.*

## Epistle

### *Hi Cecilia and Jeffrey!*

I have just returned from my mission trip from Surabaya (Indonesia) and would like to give you feedback and encouragement on the impact of your work for the LORD through 2Tim2-2.com even as you have graciously allowed the usage of your materials and ideas.

The short class on Jude was conducted to about 58 students in Surabaya, many of whom once they have graduated, would be posted all over Indonesia where their primary purpose would be evangelism.



This method of "focusing on the obvious", "marking the text", "making a list", and "analyzing the list" was unheard of prior to the class, and it is a powerful tool for the study of the Word both for the trainers and those that they intend to reach. The lesson was well-received and actively participated in.

*Thank you for your service to the LORD! The best is yet to be.*

*Justin Fong*

## Editor's Note



Dear Timothians,

2Tim2-2.com was set up on 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2002 with the intention of teaching believers how to exegete the Word of God using Inductive Bible Study skills. God has led us into setting up a website in 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2001 to reinforce the lessons and now in publishing a quarterly newsletter to update others on our ministry.

"Entrusting the Word to the Faithful" (2 Timothy 2:2) is the motto of our ministry. Just as Paul entrusted the Word to Timothy and Timothy likewise to other faithful men, even so we seek to do the same in entrusting the Word to faithful men and women, who are willing to spend time in studying the Word, in order to become true and faithful disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we draw closer to the time of the Lord's return, the church will enter into her darkest period in history. In the light of that, 2Tim2-2.com seeks to equip leaders and teachers with skills in understanding what God means by what He says in the Word, in order to establish believers on the sure and firm foundation of His Word. Apostasy is already a grim reality and the only way to confront it is by preaching the truth.

To this end, we have incorporated in the newsletter, various sections such as "It's All Greek To Me!", "Hebrew Roots", "Culture Shock" amongst others to broaden the horizon of the reader and to allow the reader to better understand the social and cultural aspects of Biblical times

It is my heart's desire that through 2Tim2-2.com, God's Word will be established in all of us, in order to produce fear and reverence for the Almighty. We trust that you will co-labor with us in this great work that God has called us to!

His bondservant,  
*Jeffrey Loh*



## End Times Survival

As the time of the Tribulation nears, it is essential for believers to prepare physically as well. This note goes out to all who are interested to help in the research, planning, co-ordination and organization of food and water needs. Kindly write to [jeffrey@2Tim2-2.com](mailto:jeffrey@2Tim2-2.com) if you are interested.



## Cecilia's India Trip

Cecilia will be making a trip to India from 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> October 2004 to meet with and encourage "old" students as well as speak at the Methodist Women's Convention held in Bangalore from 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> October 2004. She will be speaking on "Treasure in Jars of Clay" (2 Corinthians 4:7). Do pray for God's empowering as well as journey mercies during this time. There will be some 400 women leaders from churches all over India who will be attending the conference.

## 2Tim2-2.com Classes for 2004

More details on the schedule of classes for Cecilia and Jeffrey; please browse the website at

<http://www.2tim2-2.com>



## Available Teaching Session

Jeffrey is available to teach the book of **Haggai** at the beginning of year 2005. Write to him at [jeffrey@2Tim2-2.com](mailto:jeffrey@2Tim2-2.com) if your church wants open up a class for this 4-week course.



## What's Up

**Hosting:** Pastor Dave Royle will be in Singapore from the **29th October to 2nd November 2004**. Pastor Dave is the head of Moriel Missions Ministry South Africa, Ebyown Children's Village (Orphanage) & Dean of Moriel Missions Bible College.

- If your church is willing to host him for a few evening teaching sessions, kindly get in touch with us for more details at [editor@2Tim2-2.com](mailto:editor@2Tim2-2.com)

**Teaching:** Cecilia and Jeffrey are planning to teach a workshop or two on Basic / Intermediate Inductive Bible Study skills from the period **11th to 15th Nov 2004**.

- If your church is interested in hosting the workshops, do drop Jeffrey a note at [jeffrey@2Tim2-2.com](mailto:jeffrey@2Tim2-2.com)



## Teaching Resources

2Tim2-2.com audio teaching in MP3 CD with notes in PDF at only S\$10 each! Titles include:

- **Jude**
- **Joel**
- **Daniel**
- **Romans** (Part 1, 2 and 3)
- **Revelation** (Part 1)
- **Marriage without Regrets** (Part 1)
- **Hebrews** (Part 1 and 2)



## Help Wanted!

Our ministry is looking for Spirit-filled men and women to help in various areas of the ministry. If you have a talent in one or more of the following areas and would like to contribute, drop us a note:

- **Administration** (✉ [administration@2Tim2-2.com](mailto:administration@2Tim2-2.com))
  - > Writers for the newsletter
  - > Planners for November's Teaching Conference
- **Teaching** (✉ [editor@2Tim2-2.com](mailto:editor@2Tim2-2.com))
  - > Teachers for 2Tim2-2.com
  - > Preparation of the teaching materials
- **IT** (✉ [audio@2Tim2-2.com](mailto:audio@2Tim2-2.com))
  - > Duplication of MP3 CDs and teaching materials
  - > Web site design and maintenance



## Donations and love offerings

We welcome all gifts to the ministry

Please make cheques payable to  
"2Tim2-2.com"