



July - August 2007

Issue 3

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Matthew 5:16

The Vine newsletter is prepared by the youth of the Armenian Evangelical Brethren Church

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Armenian Evangelical Brethren Church
112 Sailors Bay Road, Northbridge NSW 2063

CHURCH PROGRAMS AND CONTACTS

Sunday Morning Prayer Meeting	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship Service	10:30 am
Sunday School (3-14 yr olds)	11:00 am
Mid Week Programs	
Senior Youth	Tues 8:00 pm 18+ yrs. old Call Bro. Yervant for more info 0438 699 802
Junior Youth	Fri 7:00 pm Highschooler's Call Ben for more info 0413 996 460
Children	Fri 7:00 pm
Adult Bible Studies	
Ryde area	- Mon 8:00 pm Call Pastor Hratsh for more info 0419 331 122 Tues 7:00 pm Call Bro. Kevork for more info 0410 431 365
Frenchs Forest area	- Tues 8:00 pm Call Bro. Eddie for more info 0412 688196

Lets look at Romans

As from June the 20th all church bible study groups will meet together at the church on Wednesday nights, starting at 8.00pm. We will be holding new studies from the book of Romans. It will be presented by Bro Don Stormer (Principle of Emmaus Bible College). The program will run for about 3 months. All are welcome. Contact Pastor Hratsh 0419 33 11 22 for more details.

The church address is: 112 Sailors Bay Road, Northbridge

Armenia Mission Trip

Talar and Sarineh will be travelling with CMI AID to Romania, Moldavia and Armenia during July-August to participate in various activities from Gyumri to Kharabagh. They will be joined by Trina in August who will arrive from LA, and together they will help Terenig with the summer camp activities in Kharabagh.

The Vine now has its own email address where we welcome any of your comments, suggestions or prayer points. This also enables us to send out our church's newsletter via email. If you would like to be on The Vine's mailing list, please let us know, and we will be happy to add you. So send all youth thoughts and queries to:

youth@armenianbrethren.org



Hello to you all!

I'm certain you have been waiting with bated breath, anxious for the next issue of The Vine. Hence, it is my great pleasure to announce that the agony is over, as here in your hands rests the July-August issue of our small newsletter. In this issue, we're going to be taking a look at the vulnerability of the youth of today. In recent times, our world has been hit with great tragedies, and we're going to bring these to the surface and look at the role we play and how God advises us, young people, in His Word, the Bible.

You will also find updates and recaps on GLO and ALIC events and a few extra odd-spots.

The Vine is still, very much a construction site and a growing ministry, so we would really appreciate your comments and feedback. And with this I bid you adieu and wish you 'happy reading'.

To the glory of God,

The Vine Team

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our Light, not our Darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you NOT to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightening about shrinking so that other people won't feel unsure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone. As we let our own Light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others

Marriane Williamson

Fear Not



As we're growing up we try to do the right thing, listen to what our parents have to say. We are taught that our actions have consequences and that disobedience is punishable.

Surely we have all, at least once, done something against our parents' wishes. How did you feel while you were acting that way? Did it take some self convincing that things would be alright? Did you have fear deep within?

For those "youngsters" who are not old enough to drive, and those already legal to drive. Say

you're backing out of the driveway and you scrape the edge of the car to the fence. What would your first reaction be? "What did I just do? What are my parents going to say? How am I going to fix this?" FEAR. You get scared that you're going to get punished.

Let's link this with God's word. The Bible teaches us that sin has punishment but God can forgive you through repentance of your sins.

As humans we are not perfect. Whether intentionally or otherwise, we commit sin. Then

fear hits us. Fear of God's wrath. "How will God forgive me for this? I should've known better!"

Or often times, we live our lives being totally dedicated to God so we do not anger Him out of fear that we're not doing enough for all He's done for us.

Take a moment and focus on the next three words. GOD LOVES ME. That's right. Say it and really feel it. You don't have a say in this. He loves you. Always has, always will. Same goes for your parents.

Therefore, when we're living our daily lives, we shouldn't do the right thing by our parents and God because we fear them or we fear the punishment but rather because we love them and we want to make them happy. And "We love first because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19

Angela Bilibosian

Book Review

Pilgrim's Progress

As Christians I think one of our favourite pastimes should be reading. We can all agree that reading the bible is of utmost importance because it gives us an opportunity to hear directly from God's words and allows the Spirit to apply them to our hearts without anyone else's impact. Granted, the reading of books is vastly different to this type of reading of "the" book for nothing can compare to the very words of God but if we are spending endless amounts of time reading His words, I think a certain love of reading in general cannot be avoided. Sadly, for our youth today, reading is a dying activity. Youth would much rather watch TV or listen to music because they don't have to be active in doing these things. Reading on the other hand requires a response and understanding from the reader. I am convinced that if our youth would read more Christian material, they would have much more fulfilling and active Christian lives as they would be learning for themselves

and judging for themselves whether something is true or false. There is however the question of what to read? Not all books are helpful and there is unfortunately a lot of material which is blatantly wrong but still passed on as "Christian Evangelical" teaching. For this reason I think a certain love of the classics can be the best place to start. Writers such as C.S Lewis, Andrew Murray, Oswald Chambers, Spurgeon, these are all very rich books which can help enormously in our Christian lives. It is for this reason that I wish to recommend today, one of the classics. It is a book which both young and old can enjoy and is so full of information that it can be re-read and re-read over and over. I am speaking of *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan. The book follows the adventures of Christian who lives in darkness but has seen a great light, his distress at the situation of the world around him, causes him to take a journey towards the land of the King. This journey symbolizes the Christian

life. Although fictional, the book deals with very deep truths and issues in the Christian's walk. The protagonist encounters both friends and enemies each with the name of certain virtues or difficulties. These include things like Doubtful and Obstinate and Patience and my personal favourite, Great-Heart. The reason why I recommend this book is because there are so many metaphors and allusions to reality that readers must study their own Christian life and see whether they themselves have encountered such friends and enemies and have been tricked in the various pitfalls which Christian (the main character) encounters. This is a self-help book in many ways and can be very helpful to many who are disillusioned with their walk or just looking to better understand why they feel the way they feel or what the right way to turn in certain circumstances is. Bunyan was a Puritan and as such his highest authority was the word of God. It is clear that he has written this book with

the bible in hand and has provided us with an invaluable document for this life which we lead. I recommend it highly to all readers of *The Vine* and look forward to hearing your thoughts on the book. It is available from all good Christian (and even some secular) bookstores and I'm sure many of your friends or relatives may own a copy, I'm just not sure whether they'd be willing to lend it to you!

Ben Kiujan





Family Building Family

Trina Kiujian

I write at a time when looking around at the western world we witness the vulnerability of our youth. Never before has there been such a great number of depressed teenagers, never before have there been so many strained relationships, broken families, and yet never before have we and our youth been so numb, we are experts at pushing things under the carpet, of inundating youth with computer games, television shows, movies, music, parties and entertainment.

At a time when youth is so vulnerable I thank God for the opportunity to take part in a Family Missions Trip to Mexico to build a home for a poor family. The Mexico house building trip has been an annual aspect of this particular Californian church's mission outreach. This year however, for the first time the group traveling to Mexico was different - it consisted of teenagers from 12 to 18 years of age but each teenager had to bring along one parent! The result was interesting, refreshing and definitely family building. We had teens and adults

working alongside one another, there were deep relationships being strengthened between the two groups. There were sons and fathers alongside one another on the roof, daughters and dads hammering in nails, boys with their mothers lifting sideboards, girls with their mums painting boards and posts.

Arriving at the worksite in the early afternoon work began on the house almost straight away. The team comprised of 27 people - with approximately even numbers of adults and teens. By that evening the roof of the house had been completed. Back at our accommodation we were fed a scrumptious Mexican dish and after some combined praise and worship we played a game called 'How well do you know your family member'. Three parents were quizzed about their teenage child who was sent out of the room then the roles were reversed for the next three pairs. It was wonderful to witness the way some teens knew their parents and one comment which stood out to me came from the

youngest girl on the trip, when asked what was her daddy's favourite and most repeated phrase she confidently answered 'My girls never give up!'

The next morning we travelled back to the house and it was a privilege to be a part of this team, all were tired and exhausted from the previous day's hard work but spirits were high, there were no arguments or disagreements as we sought to serve the Lord by serving one another and serving this one needy family. I was humbled to see the little dent we were making in a country rife with poverty - but with the Lord nothing is in vain. We are called to love as it says in 1 John 3:18 not just 'with words or tongue but with actions and in truth'.

One final impression I left with was the importance of the family unit at a time when youth are so vulnerable. God designed all good things, He created and established the family. It is seen all the way back in Genesis when God creates Eve for Adam and blessing them sends them forth to multiply. The family unit is meant to offer a deep

taste - be it still incomparable, to the way God longs for relationship with each and every one of us. It follows quite naturally then, that the Evil One is intent on destroying the family and all it stands for. He is working to break down every beautiful thing in this world. Sadly for many people the word 'family' does not bring to mind a place of love, acceptance and security - at times it may remind them of something quite the opposite. As God's people we should be burdened about the family unit. We should be supporting the family and God's design for it as best we can. In our families teens and parents should be playing on the same team, not on opposing sides. But it takes work, it does not just 'happen' like magic - it happens through leading by example, choosing what is good and right, through understanding, listening, quality time, it happens when we seek God and ask Him to lead us, when we pray with our family and for our family. This kind of family bears fruit and I witnessed one such fruit-bearing in Mexico - a family serving God and their fellow man together in harmony.

"... you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir. (Galatians 4:6-7, NIV)

So often our self-esteem depends on what others tell us. This is especially true of children and young adults. The words we hear from others - "you are useless", or "you're great!" - shape the way we see ourselves; and the way we are treated can shape our behaviour.

Having a proper self-image is one of the most important things for a Christian. How do I see myself – as a precious child of God, or as a sinner? As one for whom Christ died, or as one guilty of all kinds of unspeakable evil?

The reality is that we are both. On the one hand, all of us – Christian and non-Christian – are made in God's image (Genesis 1:27). Though this image has been tarnished by sin, we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14), every hair on our head is counted (Luke 12:7) and nothing that happens to us misses the watchful eye of the Father (Matthew 10:29).

At the same time, our sin is so serious, and so damaging to ourselves and others, that we deserve nothing less than eternal hell. Sin is more than just a few bad deeds; it is a whole way of being, and a life of rebellion against God. All of us fall short of God's perfect standard (Romans 3:23).

Most of us swing between thinking of ourselves as angels (image of God) and as demons (hopelessly sinful). Our self-image changes according to our mood, or what others tell us, or what we have done or not done, said or not said.

But in Christ we know that we are both sinful and children of God, both helpless and precious. In Christ, God has forgotten our sins, accepting us as we are, while giving us the ability to become more like Him. We have gone from being a beggar in the street to a child of the King, sitting in heaven with Christ, enjoying all the spiritual blessings that are ours forever (read Ephesians 1 sometime). Our old self is gone, and the image of God in us is restored. Christ is now my self-esteem.

Do I feel like a child of the King? Or do I continue to sit under the table, eating the crumbs that fall my way, hating myself and wondering how God could ever love me? It is good to come to God in humility and say, "I know I deserve nothing" – but if we stop there we have only understood the bad news. The good news is that, despite my sin, God thought I was precious enough to die for me – and He continues to love me with this same love.

Armen Gakavian

SELF-ESTEEM

