



**BETHANY INTERNATIONAL CHURCH
MELBOURNE**

DECEMBER EDITION

*I have fought the good fight, I
have finished the race, I have
kept the faith*

2 TIMOTHY 4:7

FINISH THE RACE LIFE



for my house
will be called
a house of
prayer for all
nations



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Berjalan Dalam Karya Roh Kudus

“Sebab Yohanes membaptis dengan air, tetapi tidak lama lagi kamu akan dibaptis dengan

Roh Kudus. Tetapi kamu akan menerima kuasa, kalau Roh Kudus turun ke atas kamu, dan kamu akan menjadi saksi-Ku di Yerusalem dan di seluruh Yudea dan Samaria dan sampai ke ujung bumi”.

(Kisah 1:5,8)

Roh Kudus membuat kehidupan kekristenan kita menjadi kuat dan berkemenangan. Kehidupan yang berkemenangan menjadikan kita sebagai saksi Kristus. Roh Kudus yang berkarya melalui hidup kita membuat hidup Kristus dapat ditampilkan melalui kita. Kita perlu mengenali secara pribadi, konsisten membangun gaya hidup yang semakin dalam, melalui persekutuan dengan Roh Kudus. Persekutuan yang dibangun mendalam dan semakin intim dengan Roh Kudus akan menghasilkan pertumbuhan rohani yang sehat. Penyembahan yang kita naikkan ke hadapan tahta Allah mengalir dalam hadirat-Nya dan pengurapan-Nya. Penyembahan kita kepada-Nya semakin mendalam, semakin meluap seperti mata air yang berbual-bual dalam keintiman dengan Roh Kudus. Kekuatan dan hikmat-Nya leluasa mengalir ke dalam kehidupan rohani kita menjadikan kita kuat dan berkemenangan. Perjalanan hidup dalam tahun 2019 yang akan kita hadapi membutuhkan kekuatan untuk menang atas tantangan dan pertarungan yang harus kita hadapi di depan kita.

Daging kita itu sesungguhnya lemah, namun roh kita penurut, dan Roh Kuduslah yang menjadikan roh kita menang untuk menaklukkan keinginan daging dan hawa nafsu kedagingan. Oleh Roh Kudus kita menaklukkan kedagingan kita. Kehidupan yang berkemenangan adalah landasan kuat untuk kesaksian tentang Tuhan Yesus yang hidup. Sebaliknya, kehidupan rohani yang kalah akan mencoreng nama Tuhan Yesus. Kita adalah surat Kristus yang terbuka, dibaca oleh banyak orang, dan seharusnya kita menjadi gambaran dari surat Kristus yang ditulis dengan Roh Allah yang hidup. Hidup kita membawa pesan, yaitu kabar kehidupan dan kebangkitan yang penuh pengharapan. Hidup kita bukanlah surat yang ditulis dengan tinta yang mati, yang hanya mengatakan peraturan agama, namun tidak ada kehidupan Allah di dalamnya. Roh Kudus dalam hidup kita menjadikan kesaksian hidup kita membangkitkan orang lain ke dalam pengharapan baru. Roh Kudus diberikan ke dalam hidup kita supaya kuat kuasa-Nya berkarya dalam kita, menjadikan kita kuat dan berkemenangan.

Tanpa mengalami karya Roh Kudus kekristenan lemah dan kalah. Ada banyak anak-anak Tuhan hari-hari ini tidak hidup dalam Roh Kudus, mereka lemah, mudah dikalahkan oleh perkara-perkara duniawi.

Sejak hari kebangkitan-Nya sampai terangkat ke sorga, Tuhan Yesus menekankan agar para murid menantikan janji Bapa, yaitu dipenuhi Roh Kudus. Tanpa itu semua, firman Tuhan dan pengajaran Yesus yang telah mereka pelajari akan sia-sia. Karena itu kita harus mengerti pentingnya Roh Kudus bagi hidup kita. Kita harus menginginkan untuk mengenal-Nya secara pribadi semakin dalam dan selalu menginginkan kepenuhan Roh Kudus.

Hati yang merasa butuh dan haus akan Roh Kudus, terbangun di dalam kita sesuai dengan pengenalan kita akan Pribadi Roh Kudus.

Petrus yang penuh Roh Kudus, bangkit menjadi saksi dan berbicara dengan penuh kuasa dan gairah di hari Pentakosta. Dengan kepastian dan keberanian dia menjelaskan kepada umat Israel penggenapan nubuatan nabi Yoel (**Yoel 2:28-29**) ratusan tahun sebelumnya tentang pencurahan Roh Kudus. Dengan wibawa Illahi, dia menegaskan bahwa pencurahan Roh Kudus ini esensinya adalah tentang Yesus Kristus itu sendiri. Dengan gamblang Petrus menyampaikan pesan kesaksian pada hari itu: *Yesus dibangkitkan dari kematian dan dimulihkan Allah menjadi Tuhan dan Mesias atas Israel dan atas bangsa-bangsa.* Hari itu pemahaman dari orang-orang yang ada bertentangan dengan apa yang Petrus sedang ungkapkan secara publik. Mereka belum pernah mendengar berita tentang orang mati bangkit. Apa yang disampaikan adalah berita yang tidak masuk akal. Karya Roh Kudus begitu dahsyat atas rasul Petrus. Dampak dari khotbah Petrus bagi keselamatan orang-orang Yahudi yang tadinya tidak mau menerima Yesus menjadi sangat nyata: 3000 orang bertobat dan memberi diri dibaptis.

Kita membutuhkan pekerjaan Roh Kudus yang seperti ini pada masa sekarang. Mari kita mendoakan pokok ini agar kuasa Pentakosta di Era Pentakosta ketiga semakin dimanifestasikan di tengah bangsa kita sekarang.

Haus dan Lapar akan Hadirat Tuhan

Roh Kudus berkarya dengan nyata di tengah-tengah umat yang haus akan Dia. Karena itu milikilah hati yang haus akan Pribadi Roh Kudus, dan bangun persekutuan yang semakin mendalam.

“Dan pada hari terakhir, yaitu pada puncak perayaan itu, Yesus berdiri dan berseru: “Barangsiapa haus, baiklah ia datang kepada-Ku dan minum! Barangsiapa percaya kepada-Ku, seperti yang dikatakan oleh Kitab Suci: Dari dalam hatinya akan mengalir aliran-aliran air hidup.”

Yang dimaksudkan-Nya ialah Roh yang akan diterima oleh mereka yang percaya kepada-Nya; sebab Roh itu belum datang, karena Yesus belum dimuliakan.” (*Yohanes 7:37-39*).

Hati yang haus adalah hati yang mau mencari Tuhan, dan tekun menantikan Tuhan. Itu adalah pilihan dan keputusan untuk membuang dan menyingkirkan setiap godaan dan pancingan bagi kesenangan daging dan keinginan mata yang membuat fokus kita dibelokkan.

Dunia menawarkan hiburan dan kenyamanan yang memanjakan, dan daging kita ingin untuk berada ditempat nyaman, menikmati apa yang disajikan oleh dunia ini. Hati yang dikenyangkan dengan kesenangan dunia akan mematikan rasa haus dan rasa butuh akan Roh Kudus. Orang yang seperti ini akan menjadi orang yang bingung dan heran melihat orang yang bergairah dan berkobar ketika ada di dalam ibadah, karena dia akan merasakan hatinya yang sepi-sepi saja, dan tidak merasakan hadirat Tuhan maupun pewahyuan yang sedang Dia bukakan. Dia hanya jadi penonton yang bengong dan tidak mengalami apa-apa sementara orang lain dijamah Tuhan dan mengalami pengurapan Roh Kudus.

Cinta kepada Tuhan tidak dapat dibandingkan dengan cinta akan dunia ini. Cinta kepada hal-hal duniawi akan memadamkan gairah kita kepada Tuhan. Keinginan daging dan keangkuhan hidup yang memberi makan kepada ego manusiawi kita akan menjadikan kesuaman dan mati suri rohani. Sebaliknya, ketegasan memilih untuk mencari Tuhan dengan menolak godaan dan bujukan memanjakan keinginan daging membuat kita jadi bernyala dalam cinta Tuhan dan haus akan kehadirannya. Inilah yang menjadikan kuasa Roh Kudus nyata berkarya dalam hidup kita.

Ambil keputusan untuk menjadi orang yang responsif kepada Roh Kudus. Kuasa Roh. Roh Kudus adalah Roh yang mengajar kebenaran, dan menuntun kita ke dalam kebenaran. Respon kita yang benar menjadikan kita hidup dalam kebenaran-Nya, dan menjadi orang-orang benar yang memanasifasikan kuasa-Nya.

Menyadari Kehadiran-Nya

Kesadaran akan kehadiran Roh Kudus yang senantiasa ada di dalam kita membuat kita bersandar dan mengandalkan Roh Kudus. Kita adalah Bait Roh Kudus. Roh Kudus senantiasa tinggal di dalam kita, bukan seperti di era Perjanjian Lama, Roh Kudus hanya “*berkunjung*” sementara. Jadi menyadari akan keberadaan-Nya dan penyertaan-Nya di hati kita, membuat kita mawas untuk menghargai Roh Kudus, dan tidak mendukakan-Nya dengan melakukan apa yang bertentangan dengan Roh Kudus.

Kita berhati-hati menjaga “*perasaan Roh Kudus*” dengan senantiasa menghormati dan mensyukuri kasih-Nya yang terus mengalir. Kasih Allah dicurahkan sempurna di hati kita oleh Roh Kudus yang diam di hati kita. Kasih itu menginginkan respons yang benar dari kita. Respons kasih akan berbuah ketaatan kepada Tuhan.

“Kamu akan Kuberikan hati yang baru, dan roh yang baru di dalam batinmu dan Aku akan menjauhkan dari tubuhmu hati yang keras dan Kuberikan kepadamu hati yang taat. Roh-Ku akan Kuberikan diam di dalam batinmu dan Aku akan membuat kamu hidup menurut segala ketetapan-Ku dan tetap berpegang pada peraturan-peraturan-Ku dan melakukannya.” (Yehezkiel 36:26-27).

Roh Kudus memberikan kemampuan agar kita menjadi seorang yang taat menuruti Tuhan dan hidup menurut hukum-Nya. Hal itu bukanlah semata-mata kemampuan alamiah kita, melainkan karena memiliki hati yang baru, yang mengalami aliran hidup dan kuasa dari Roh Kudus.

Alamilah aliran kasih-Nya dengan hidup yang setia tinggal dalam hadirat-Nya, maka kuasa-Nya menjadi nyata berkarya, menjadikan kita saksi, sebagai surat Kristus yang dibaca dengan jernih oleh banyak orang akan kenyataan kasih Kristus yang penuh kuasa. Amin. (MG)

23

DEC

In Abundance or Affliction

Read

Job 1:13–22

Bible in a Year

Nahum 1–3;
Revelation 14

*The Lord gave
and the Lord
has taken
away; may
the name of
the Lord be
praised.*

Job 1:21

By Kirsten Holmberg

Ann Voskamp’s book *One Thousand Gifts* encourages readers to search their lives each day for what the Lord has done for them. In it, she daily notes God’s abundant generosity to her in gifts both large and small, ranging from the simple beauty of iridescent bubbles in the dish sink to the incomparable salvation of sinners like herself (and the rest of us!). Ann contends that gratitude is the key to seeing God in even the most troubling of life’s moments.

Job is famous for a life of such “troubling” moments. Indeed, his losses were deep and many. Just moments after losing all his livestock, he learns of the simultaneous death of all his ten children. Job’s profound grief was evidenced in his response: he “tore his robe and shaved his head” (1:20). His words in that painful hour make me think Job knew the practice of gratitude, for he acknowledges that God had given him everything he’d lost (v. 21). How else could he worship in the midst of such incapacitating grief?

The practice of daily gratitude can’t erase the magnitude of pain we feel in seasons of loss. Job questioned and grappled through his grief as the rest of the book describes. But recognizing God’s goodness to us—in even the smallest of ways—can prepare us to kneel in worship before our all-powerful God in the darkest hours of our earthly lives.

O God, You are the Giver of all good things. Help me to recognize Your generosity in even the smallest ways and to trust You in seasons of loss and hardship.

▣ *Why not start a gratitude list? Watch how the regular practice of thankfulness changes your daily life.* ▣

Ponder It

24 DEC

During Oswald Chambers' years at the Bible Training College in London (1911–15), he often startled the students with things he said during his lectures. One young woman explained that because discussion was reserved for the following mealtime together, Chambers would frequently be bombarded with questions and objections. She recalled that Oswald would often simply smile and say, "Just leave it for now; it will come to you later." He encouraged them to ponder the issues and allow God to reveal His truth to them.

To ponder something is to concentrate and think deeply about it. After the events leading to the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, followed by the appearance of angels and the shepherds who came to see the Messiah, "Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). New Testament scholar W. E. Vine said that ponder means "to throw together, confer, to put one thing with another in considering circumstances" (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words).

When we struggle to understand the meaning of what's happening in our lives, we have Mary's wonderful example of what it means to seek God and His wisdom.

When we, like her, accept God's leading in our lives, we have many new things about His loving guidance to treasure and ponder in our hearts.

Father, guide us by Your Holy Spirit as we consider Your great love and embrace Your plan for our lives.

Read

Luke 2:8–20

Bible in a Year

Habakkuk 1–3;

Revelation 15

Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

Luke 2:19

By David C. McCasland

Allow yourself a few minutes of quiet during this busy season to sit and listen for what God might be saying to you.

25 DEC

Winter Snow

Read
Isaiah
42:1–4

Bible in a Year
Zephaniah 1–3;
Revelation 16

*He will not
shout or cry
out, or raise
his voice in
the streets. A
bruised reed he
will not break.*
Isaiah 42:2–3

By Lisa Samra

In winter, I often wake to the beautiful surprise of a world blanketed in the peace and quiet of an early morning snow. Not loudly like a spring thunderstorm that announces its presence in the night, snow comes softly.

In “Winter Snow Song,” Audrey Assad sings that Jesus could have come to earth in power like a hurricane, but instead He came quietly and slowly like the winter snow falling softly in the night outside my window.

Jesus’s arrival took many by quiet surprise. Instead of being born in a palace, He was born in an unlikely place, a humble dwelling outside Bethlehem. And He slept in the only bed available, a manger (Luke 2:7). Instead of being attended by royalty and government officials, Jesus was welcomed by lowly shepherds (vv. 15–16). Instead of having wealth, Jesus’s parents could only afford the inexpensive sacrifice of two birds when they presented Him at the temple (v. 24).

The unassuming way Jesus entered the world was foreshadowed by the prophet Isaiah, who prophesied the coming Savior would “not shout or cry out” (Isaiah 42:2) nor would He come in power that might break a damaged reed or extinguish a struggling flame (v. 3). Instead He came gently in order to draw us to Himself with His offer of peace with God—a peace still available to anyone who believes the unexpected story of a Savior born in a manger.

Lord Jesus, thank You for willingly giving up Your majesty and coming to earth in order to offer peace.

“How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given! —O Little Town of Bethlehem.”

Just Another Day?

26
DEC

In *Christmas Every Day*, William Dean Howells tells of a little girl who gets her wish. For one long, horrible year it is indeed Christmas every day. By day three, the yuletide joy has already begun to wear thin. Before long everyone hates candy. Turkeys become scarce and sell for outrageous prices. Presents are no longer received with gratitude as they pile up everywhere. People angrily snap at each other.

Thankfully, Howell's story is just a satirical tale. But what an incredible blessing that the subject of the Christmas celebration never wearies us despite the fact that we see Him throughout the Bible.

After Jesus had ascended to His Father, the apostle Peter proclaimed to a crowd at the temple in Jerusalem that Jesus was the one Moses foretold when he said, "God will raise up for you a prophet like me" (Acts 3:22; Deuteronomy 18:18). God's promise to Abraham, "Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed," was really a reference to Jesus (Acts 3:25; Genesis 22:18). Peter noted, "All the prophets who have spoken have foretold these days"—the arrival of the Messiah (Acts 3:24).

We can keep the spirit of Christmas alive long after the celebrations have ended. By seeing Christ in the whole story of the Bible we can appreciate how Christmas is so much more than just another day.

Father, thank You for giving us Your Son, and for giving us His Story on the pages of the Bible.

Read

Acts 3:17–26

Bible in a Year

Haggai 1–2;

Revelation 17

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus.

Acts 3:13

By Tim Gustafson

“This year, as you pack up the Christmas decorations, don’t put away the spirit of Christmas.”

27

DEC

The Highest Place

Read

Colossians
1:15–23

Bible in a Year
Zechariah 1–4;
Revelation 18

*He is before all
things, and in
him all things
hold together.*
Colossians 1:17

By Keila Ochoa

My husband invited a friend to church. After the service his friend said, “I liked the songs and the atmosphere, but I don’t get it. Why do you give Jesus such a high place of honor?” My husband then explained to him that Christianity is a relationship with Christ. Without Him, Christianity would be meaningless. It’s because of what Jesus has done in our lives that we meet together and praise Him.

Who is Jesus and what has He done? The apostle Paul answered this question in Colossians 1. No one has seen God, but Jesus came to reflect and reveal Him (v. 15). Jesus, as the Son of God, came to die for us and free us from sin. Sin has separated us from God’s holiness, so peace could only be made through someone perfect. That was Jesus (vv. 14, 20). In other words, Jesus has given us what no one else could—access to God and eternal life (John 17:3).

Why does He deserve such a place of honor? He conquered death. He won our hearts by His love and sacrifice. He gives us new strength every day. He is everything to us!

We give Him the glory because He deserves it. We lift Him up because that is His rightful place. Let’s give Him the highest place in our hearts.

Jesus, You are my Savior and my Lord, and I want to give You the highest place of honor in my life.

Good Riddance Day

28
DEC

Since 2006 a group of people have celebrated an unusual event around the New Year. It's called Good Riddance Day. Based on a Latin American tradition, individuals write down unpleasant, embarrassing memories and bad issues from the past year and throw them into an industrial-strength shredder. Or some take a sledgehammer to their good riddance item.

The writer of Psalm 103 goes beyond suggesting that people say good riddance to unpleasant memories. He reminded us that God bids good riddance to our sins. In his attempt to express God's vast love for His people, the psalmist used word pictures. He compared the vastness of God's love to the distance between the heavens and the earth (v. 11). Then the psalmist talked about His forgiveness in spatial terms. As far as the place where the sun rises is from the place where the sun sets, so the Lord has removed His people's sins from them (v. 12). The psalmist wanted God's people to know that His love and forgiveness were infinite and complete. God freed His people from the power of their transgressions by fully pardoning them.

Good news! We don't have to wait until the New Year to experience Good Riddance Day. Through our faith in Jesus, when we confess and turn from our sins, He bids good riddance to them and casts them into the depths of the sea. Today can be a Good Riddance Day!

Thank You, Father, for freedom from sin.

Read

Psalm 103:1–12

Bible in a Year

Zechariah 5–8;

Revelation 19

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Psalm 103:12

By Marvin Williams

“What sins do you need to say goodbye to? How does it make you feel knowing that God infinitely and completely forgets your sins?”

29

DEC

When God Says No

Read

Isaiah 25:1–5

Bible in a Year

Zechariah 9–12;

Revelation 20

*In perfect
faithfulness
you have done
wonderful
things, things
planned long
ago.*

Isaiah 25:1

By Leslie Koh

When I was conscripted into the military at age eighteen, as all young Singaporean men are, I prayed desperately for an easy posting. A clerk or driver, perhaps. Not being particularly strong, I hoped to be spared the rigors of combat training. But one evening as I read my Bible, one verse leaped off the page: “My grace is sufficient for you . . .” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

My heart dropped—but it shouldn’t have. God had answered my prayers. Even if I received a difficult assignment, He would provide for me.

So I ended up as an armored infantryman, doing things I didn’t always enjoy. Looking back now, I’m grateful God didn’t give me what I wanted. The training and experience toughened me physically and mentally and gave me confidence to enter adulthood.

In Isaiah 25:1–5, after prophesying Israel’s punishment and subsequent deliverance from her enemies, the prophet praises God for His plans. All these “wonderful things,” Isaiah notes, had been “planned long ago” (v. 1), yet they included some arduous times.

It can be hard to hear God saying no, and even harder to understand when we’re praying for something good—like someone’s deliverance from a crisis. That’s when we need to hold on to the truth of God’s good plans. We may not understand why, but we can keep trusting in His love, goodness, and faithfulness.

*Lord, give me the faith to keep trusting You even when You say
no.*

▮ *When God says no, He has a plan. Keep trusting Him!* ▮

Pray for Nation

HAITI



Capital: *Havana*

Population: *11,1 million people.*

Religion: *Roman Catholic*



1. God forgives the sins of this nation who still believe in witchcraft , so that their hearts are reversed from belief in Voodoo to believe in God. And committed to living in all His righteousness.
2. If they humble themselves, pray and seek the face of God, then turn from their wicked ways, God will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins, and heal their land (2 Chr 7: 14).
3. As a result of the disasters upon this nation, to this day Haiti still continues to fix their country. Pray that the recovery and development process will proceed smoothly and through this, the Haitian people will truly fear the Lord.
4. Raise a leader who will bring Haiti into a new season, the old Haiti has long passed and the new Haiti has arrived. Amen.



MAIN SERVICE

8.30 am & 11 am
(Indonesian with English
translation)

SUNDAY SCHOOL

9 am (English)

180

(TEENS)

8.45 am (English)

NEXT GENERATION

(YOUTH)

11 am (English)

PRAYER TOWER

Point Cook | Monday | 7:15 PM
BIC Melbourne | Tuesday | 6:30 PM
Mount Waverly | Wednesday | 7:15 PM
BIC Melbourne | Friday | 12:00 PM
BIC Melbourne (Fasting Prayer) | Saturday | 10:00 AM

COOL

Friday, 7:00 PM

LADIES FELLOWSHIP

Women of Impact Community

Tuesday 10:30 AM, at BIC

EVENTS

Christmas Service

Tuesday, 25 December, 10 AM

New Years Eve Thanksgiving Night

Monday, 31 December, 7-9 PM



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