

Celebrating SG50 in the City in the Garden & Looking to the City of God

Many accolades have been showered on Singapore: #1 in innovation, business openness, health, clean government and education.

Singapore in 1965 was not a pretty island. There were



mosquitoes, latrines over water-hyacinth ponds and pig farms. Many coolies slogged as they carried heavy goods from the boats in the Singapore river. The river was stinking and the water was black. Today, in 2015, Singapore is known as a city in the garden. Newater is produced from



waste waters. The mouth of the Singapore River is now a freshwater reservoir.

In Singapore especially in 1960s, those who were young have heard and learned many local versions of swear words in our kampongs and SIT flats. What can we say of our own former life before we come to believe that Christ is our Saviour, Lord and coming King? Our words were coarse and filthy.

When we received Jesus Christ into our lives, are there internal transformation and external changes in our conduct and behavior? As believers, we need to guard ourselves from careless words that pollute talkers and defile hearers. When we behold the holiness of God in our worship, and wonder at the beauty of His creation, do we recognize our past moral bankruptcy and ugliness of sin and iniquity?

The prophet Isaiah beheld the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of His robe filled the temple. The seraphim called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" And Isaiah confessed: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" (Isa 6:5)

Thanks be to God! His Scripture and His Spirit cleanse and renew our minds and hearts, as we abide in the Word and the Spirit (John 15:7; 1 John 2:27-28).

God has given us both His vision of the glorious future through our Lord Jesus Christ. He and His followers, past and present, showed us how to live, love and how to serve Him. God, our Creator, gives to each human being a living soul. Only He can change and transform the human being from the inside out.

Those of us who lived through Singapore's external transformations over the last 50 years are thankful to God for giving us leaders and public servants with integrity and vision. Let us as Singaporean Christians set our hopes in God. Serve Christ with love. He has delivered us from the domain of spiritual darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

In Christ we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Col 1:13-14). Let the light of Jesus shine through you to the fellow believers and citizens, also to foreigners who live and work amongst us. Look forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God (Heb 11:10; Rev 21:23).

Meanwhile, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit pray and reach out with mercy those who are without faith and hope. Preach the Gospel of the grace of Christ until He comes (Jude 1:20-25).

Elder Yoong Yuen Soo