

# The Challenge

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

JANUARY 27, 2000

## One In Love (O.I.L.)

By Andrew Choi, SEAS '01

Over this past winter break, I attended my first O.I.L. retreat. I shall try to communicate what I learned and experienced in those four short days, but I know no article can do justice to convey to the reader my sense of awe and joy at having rediscovered the amazing love and goodness of our God. For that is exactly what I walked away from the retreat with – a heart that fell in love all over again with his Maker.

Do not be misled. As much as I like to tell everyone how good the retreat was, my purpose in this article is not

to endorse O.I.L. Anyone who attended past O.I.L.'s will tell you, the retreat is very emotional and intense. Emotions can be a good thing – so long as we know what we're getting emotional about. The blessings I received were not from the retreat in and of itself but rather, it was from being in the presence of God, who can be met anywhere. And I pray that God will use me to share the blessings I received through His Spirit that works so powerfully in us who believe.

Among the various seminars offered at O.I.L., I

signed up for the missions track. For a very long time, I held a very romanticized view of missions. But my motivations for wanting to go on missions were wrong. Although I thought my desire for missions sprang out of studying the word and prayer, I realized I held many misconceptions that prevented me from really being used by God. In particular, I saw the absurdity of my going thousands of miles overseas in some foreign land to do something that I couldn't even do here – building solid relationships with non-Christians and

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## Testimony

By Liz Kim BC '00

As I was singing praise songs with everyone during "Praise on the Lawn", I couldn't help but feel excited about the new semester. People were passing by and curiously looking at this group of singing students sitting in a circle on the lawn. Some of us decided to approach the onlookers and invite them to join us. That's how I met Augustus, a maintenance employee of Columbia University.

"Hi, would you like to know what's going on?" I asked.

"Oh, I already know what you guys are doing. I've been coming the past couple of years to see how many new faces have joined your group on the lawn. I see you've got four or five new freshmen – that's great!", said Augustus.

Whoa, how did he recognize old and new faces? We talked some more and I told him that I was a senior. Then he looked me in the eye and asked, "So sister, how many fish have you caught for the Lord during your three years at Columbia?"

"I've shared the gospel with people but I haven't caught any fish yet", I replied. That sudden realization made me sad.

Augustus continued excitedly, "Sister, commit this last year to serving the Lord! Give your all for Him and ask for fruit that will last. If you ask Him for fish, He'll let you catch some! It doesn't depend on what you can do, but rather on the Spirit of God who moves the hearts of people."

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## Bible Reading Y2K

By Paul Kim SEAS '02

3 Things I learned over Bible Reading:

1) God has tried everything possible to get humans to love him, yet humans keep running the other way.

God's chosen people have a knack of incurring the wrath of the Almighty God. Poor them. This theme is actually kind of funny, which leads to my second point.

2) God has a sense of humor.

My new favorite passage in the Bible is 2 Kings 2:23-25. It's hilarious. I'm not sure God meant it to be funny, but I think it's the funni-

est story I've read in a long time.

3) Every Christian should do Bible reading

I have never been blessed more in one week, than when I the week I did Bible reading. For those of you who do not know what Bible reading is, it is a 5-day period where you read the Bible straight through. When I first heard of Bible reading last year, I was skeptical. I felt pretty proud of myself at having read most of the Bible already. I believed that as long as I had read the major sections of the Bible, and had a general understanding of each section, that would be all I needed for my Christian walk. But that attitude was born out of complacency and lack of desire to know God.

The Bible is an unbelievably well told story. After all, it is the story of the universe. Genesis is the actually beginning of the universe, and Revelation is the end. Not only does it answer the truth that humankind has searched for, but it provides a solution for our problems. The beauty of the Bible is its comprehensive nature; it shows what God sees as important.

Context. That is what makes Bible reading so powerful. Usually when people read the Bible, they can't read enough to fully see the circumstances and situation to understand what the God's big plan is. One thing I loved about Bible reading was it fit all the random Bible stories into a coherent progression. Instead of

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## One In Love cont'd

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being an effective witness for Christ. In reality I was running away from something.

What I learned at the missions seminars given by Dr. Steve Lee was that my desire for missions must be rooted in obedience to God's will and word. Although there are too many points to share (I have the tapes of the recorded seminar if anyone is interested), here are just two I wrote in my notes during the seminar.

- From the beginning of the bible in Genesis 3:9, after Adam and Eve sinned and were lost in fellowship with God, God immediately went looking saying, "Where are you?" And hence the "redemptive history" of mankind began. We therefore trace missions, not to the Cross or even to Pentecost, but to the very nature and character of God.

- Blessings always come with responsibility. God blesses us so for the specific purpose that we be a blessing unto others. And in order to mediate for others and be used as God's in-

struments, we must be holy. When we lose our holiness, we lose our ability to be a witness for God.

Again, I realize as I am rushing to finish this article that there is just too much in terms of the biblical basis of missions for me to adequately do the subject justice. I urge anyone who's interested to get the tapes from me or talk to anyone who's gone to O.I.L. and attended the missions track.

I know that not everyone is called to be an overseas missionary. But every Christian has the responsibility of being

a light wherever God has placed them.

And I firmly believe that every Christian must invest themselves to missions work, whether it is only in prayer, sending, financially supporting, etc. We must have a heart for the lost because our God has a heart for the lost, wherever they are. And we must not forget our brothers and sisters who are being persecuted around the world because of Christ. My hope is that many of you can join me in His missionary cause.

Below is a picture of my awesome small group at the O.I.L. retreat!



# The Joy of Obedience

By Bob Koo, CC '00

"In the case of the chosen people, who for nearly seventy years had been strangers in a strange land, and had drunk the cup of bitterness to its dregs, there was thus added weight to their sorrow--the conviction of their captivity being the result of their own impenitence and transgression. **This is the bitterest of all--to know that suffering need not have been; that it had resulted from indiscretion and inconsistency; that it is the harvest of one's own sowing; that the vulture which feeds on the vitals is a nestling of one's own rearing.** Ah me! This is pain!"

-F.B. Meyer, *Christ in Isaiah*

Ack. Another bad day and I know why. I always know why. But the story doesn't change. Instead of following God, I chose to follow something else. Whether it was my lazy feelings, my selfish desires, or just my innate foolishness, I had disobeyed. And now I feel miserable. I have to find a way to end this trail of destruction once and for all...

You see, when any of us disobey, we face the consequences of sin. And they're never pleasant. God loves us too much so that when we play with fire carelessly, he has to burn us. Read that above quote again- he's talking about the Israelites and how their suffering was made worse because they realized they

brought it about themselves. We can avoid so much suffering if we would just obey what God has laid out for us and stop breaking fellowship with Him. And for us, it's all the answers are in the Word.

When we disobey, we pay the price. When I disobey, hope gets a little harder to find and life a little tougher to endure; you might have experienced the same. God loves us so much that He asks that we obey not only to show that we love Him, but also so we can reap the benefits of His amazing love. And He really, really wants to give it all to us...

"The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to their eyes."

-Psalm 19:8

It's pretty cut and dry to me, and I hope you think so too. If we want joy in our heart and light in our eyes, we need to 1) know the Word of God and 2) apply it. Simple, right? So let's read the Word everyday to know what God wants us to do. And then let's apply it.

But if it's that simple, then why don't we do it? If we really believe that God's law is right and radiant and that we'll benefit greatly just by

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## Testimony Cont'd

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Could this be true? Excitement filled my heart as I accepted God's challenge to commit my last year to serving Him. And so, I prayed that the Lord would allow me to catch some fish and waited in expectation, though I knew not how my prayers would be answered.

Then in October, God gave me the opportunity to lead two of the girls in my small group to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. I asked all my small group members whether they had invited Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior. Two of them told me that they had not. However, they let me know that their belief in God had been growing as of late. So, on two separate occasions I went through the Four Spiritual Laws with each of them and prayed with them as they accepted Jesus Christ into their lives as their Lord and Savior. The bible says that the angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent (Luke 15:7,10). I rejoiced with the angels.

It is truly exciting to lead someone to Christ. All we must do is ask for fish, expect Him to give them to us and actively share the gospel with those around us with a prayerful heart as we wait for the Spirit to lead some to salvation. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).

## Bible Reading Y2K

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having stories exist by themselves, I realize that they all fit perfectly into God's plan.

People who have never done a Bible reading are missing out on an incredible blessing from God, namely his very message to his people. If you have any desire to know God's will and to build up your relationship to him, I have found nothing better than spending time in his word.

If you are interested in Bible reading for next year call me, Paul Kim at ext. 35719

## MISSIONS CORNER



Country: United States of America  
 State: New York  
 City: New York  
 Mission Field: Columbia University  
 Undergraduate Population: 7355  
 CC: 3840  
 SEAS: 1215  
 Barnard College: 2300

### Prayer Focus:

-For Christians to be not ashamed to share Christ to others  
 -For fellow students' hearts to be receptive to the hearing of the Gospel

## The Joy of Obedience

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obeying, then how come we DON'T obey? Well that's where faith comes in- many times it doesn't appear to us that we'll benefit because we often just do we want to do, and don't always put God's ideas in the equation. Or we just don't feel like obeying and would rather just take a 'break' from obedience. We let our feelings get in the way of our faith...

But there might be something else that is much more problematic- we don't read the Word. We make time for so much else each day, but too often when it comes to His Word, we make excuses. Sure, we hear it at church and in small group and in large group, but for our own personal study, it's just not always there. But

let's look at another one of his promises:

"And we also thank God continually because when you received the Word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe."

-Thessalonians 2:13

So recognize that when you read, that it's not just any book. It's revelation from the living and only God-right in your hands! Trust me, if we come to God's book with a worshipful attitude, it WILL be at work in us. And He is always working for our good, looking to make us more like Jesus. Of course, we won't be perfect, but we'll stay on the right track. So let's keep reading and meditating,

and get ready for changes to unfold in your life.

Thus, in the one million or so decisions you make each day, obey God, regardless what how your desires or heart might be different. And make sure one of those decisions each day is a time to read and meditate upon the Word of God. You'll have joy in your heart, and light in your eyes. I guarantee it, because the Lord says so; Ephesians 5:10 exhorts us to "find out what pleases the Lord." Find out what pleases Him from the Word, and then do it. You'll be quite pleased yourself. I'll look to obey too, and I'll look forward to many joyful days ahead. And I hope you'll be right there with me too, joyful and bright.



## SHOUT OUTS!!

To my awesome, (but very loud) CARE GROUP members (so young, mary, chris, john, bob, and pilly), Here's a shout out for you all!!!AHHHHHHH!!! MY CARE GROUP!!! YOU'RE THE BEST CARE GROUP IN THE WORLD !!! <CLAP!><CLAP!> =) See..I can do it too! Anyways, I'm encouraged by all your hearts' desires to see others flourish in the Lord. Press on toward the prize! In Jesus love, esther

To my small group girls (linda lee, janet, hanna/helen, esther, patty and anna), Do you know how much God has blessed me through each of you? There is absolutely NO way you can know the extent of it. I am so encouraged each time you guys open up and share about your love relationship with God. It's my hope that we will keep falling more and more in love with our God. Let's be PUMPED for the semester ahead! WHOO HOO!!! Love always, always, always, Tae.

AAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!- Matt Paik

To my small group girls (kensi, gina, jenn, youghui, eunice, christine, and paulette), I'm blessed each and every time we share and pray with one another. God hand-picked each one of you to be in my group, and for that I'm so thankful. I can see God's radiant love shining in each of you. =) I love you sisters! ~in Jesus' love, esther

To Everyone: Press On! -Jenny Ko

If you would like to make a Shout Out, please write to Jimmy Ahn, [jja23@columbia.edu](mailto:jja23@columbia.edu)

## Poetry

By Chin Ho Cheng, CC '03

How could you have found rest at night? How could you have found a moment's rest when your soul was like one of the faceless wanderers who writhed and grimaced ceaselessly in the darkness? You sought meaning in the footfalls of shadows but found only the bitterness of their faint and dying echoes.

When she sat close beside you and you felt her warm breath upon your reddened face in the cold, winter air, did she emerge from a cloak of shadows into the light so that you held her and no longer trembled as you draped her warmth around your shoulders? Had she emerged to embrace you, the memory of such an embrace could have been wrapped and placed into a box to be stored away (or lost) in your closet of countless memories. But when you fell ill or mourned the death of a loved one, not an ounce of strength came to you from such memories.

But your eyes never even met. The thought of wanting and not having only increased the sufferings. She stood in the pinkish haze of the horizon, like a glimmering goddess, as you admired her. She remained but for an instant before she vanished. When you awoke you could not remember what you had dreamt. As you stood outside half-dressed, you saw the frost of your breath appear in a shapeless puff and fade away into the cold night. The stars shifted, the sun rose. How the tint of your eyes changed and slowly lost their glow as you began to count: one, two, three and number the wrinkles on your hand. You contemplated the flowing of the silent waters and the joy of the rising sun so as to become one amid the chaos. You gazed in wonder at the statues' cold, burnished faces, earnestly supplicating. And yet after all that, life was still in the papers and your scribbles and the countless cups of coffee that lay empty and scattered across your desk. In short, you were living among the dead.

But one night-one miraculous night-rest no longer came easily to you. And you shuddered at the thought of the painful look upon His holy face, how his blood stained his pure skin, how the nails broke his bones and flesh. Did you see His resplendent face as He hung dead upon the cross? But Love arose. Love that does not settle in for one night and disappear in the morning but remain seven when the leaves fall and scatter the earth like feckless sheets of tarnished gold; love that eases the sorrows of the young and warms the shivering of the old; love that does not disappear even when the tears come, but stays to dry them.

## Upcoming Events

### January

**28-30**

**KCCC Join Retreat**

**31**

**Dr. Michael Brown**

### February

**4-6**

**CCC North-  
Regional Confer-  
ence**

**11**

**Brothers/Sisters  
Night**

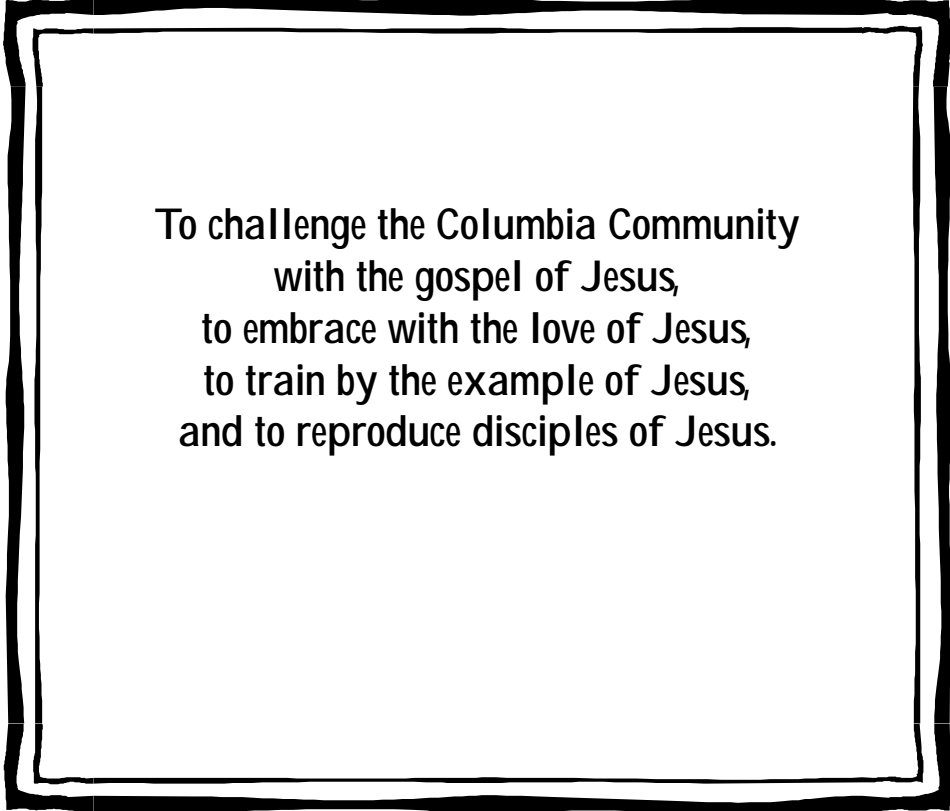
### February

**14**

**Valentine's Day  
Celebration**

**25-26**

**Christian Confer-  
ence  
Sponsored by  
Black Church of  
Columbia**



**To challenge the Columbia Community  
with the gospel of Jesus,  
to embrace with the love of Jesus,  
to train by the example of Jesus,  
and to reproduce disciples of Jesus.**

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