

It's that time of year when one takes stock of the past and makes new resolutions for the future. Last Sunday I spoke at the local Chinese Alliance Church where my thoughts were centred around the words of the apostle John in his first letter *I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. (1 John 2:12-14)*

(Note that none of these terms are gender sensitive or genealogical ages.)

I saw this as a simple measuring rod by which one can gauge their spiritual growth. "Little children" are those who know these two things – their sins are forgiven and they have come to know the Father. I trust all my readers can claim these two things. "Fathers" are those who have reached some level of maturity by which they 'know Him who has been from the beginning'. God has revealed much of His character to them. This should be the goal of all believers – to come to know Him more. However, no one can proceed from being 'little children' to becoming 'fathers' without the intermediate stage of growing that John calls 'young men'.

God is looking for 'overcomers' in the various battlefields of life. There is a war going on between Satan and his hordes and the believer – and Jesus expects us to overcome, for *greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world*. Only to the overcomer is He willing to reveal Himself. *(See my expanded notes on this on my Teachings page.)*

At the end of another year, I ask myself what more has He revealed of Himself to me than I knew a year ago.

He has continued to show His faithfulness in many areas.

We have been amazed at the **peace** we have experienced throughout Anne's battle with cancer – He truly is Jehovah Shalom – our peace.

We believe Anne has been **healed** by His touch. Her doctors have been surprised at the speedy demise of the tumors – He is truly Jehovah Rapha – our healer.

He continues to meet our **financial** needs – often to our amazement – He is truly Jehovah Jireh – our provider.

We have looked with wonder at **the path** He has led Andrea and Rob to the pastorate in Wales (see last newsletter) beginning with my visit there five years ago. Who would have thought then that He was preparing the way before them?. We have seen His 'stepping stones' in our lives as we look back *(see my book on this web)* but now we see them in our children's lives. Truly He is Jehovah Raah – our shepherd.

I thank Him for the promise that He is Jehovah Tsidkenu – our righteousness, and Jehovah Sabaoth – our protector.

My resolution therefore will be that He shall always be Jehovah Nissi – our banner. It is under His flag that we shall commit our selves to live and be overcomers in all He brings us to.

Gareth