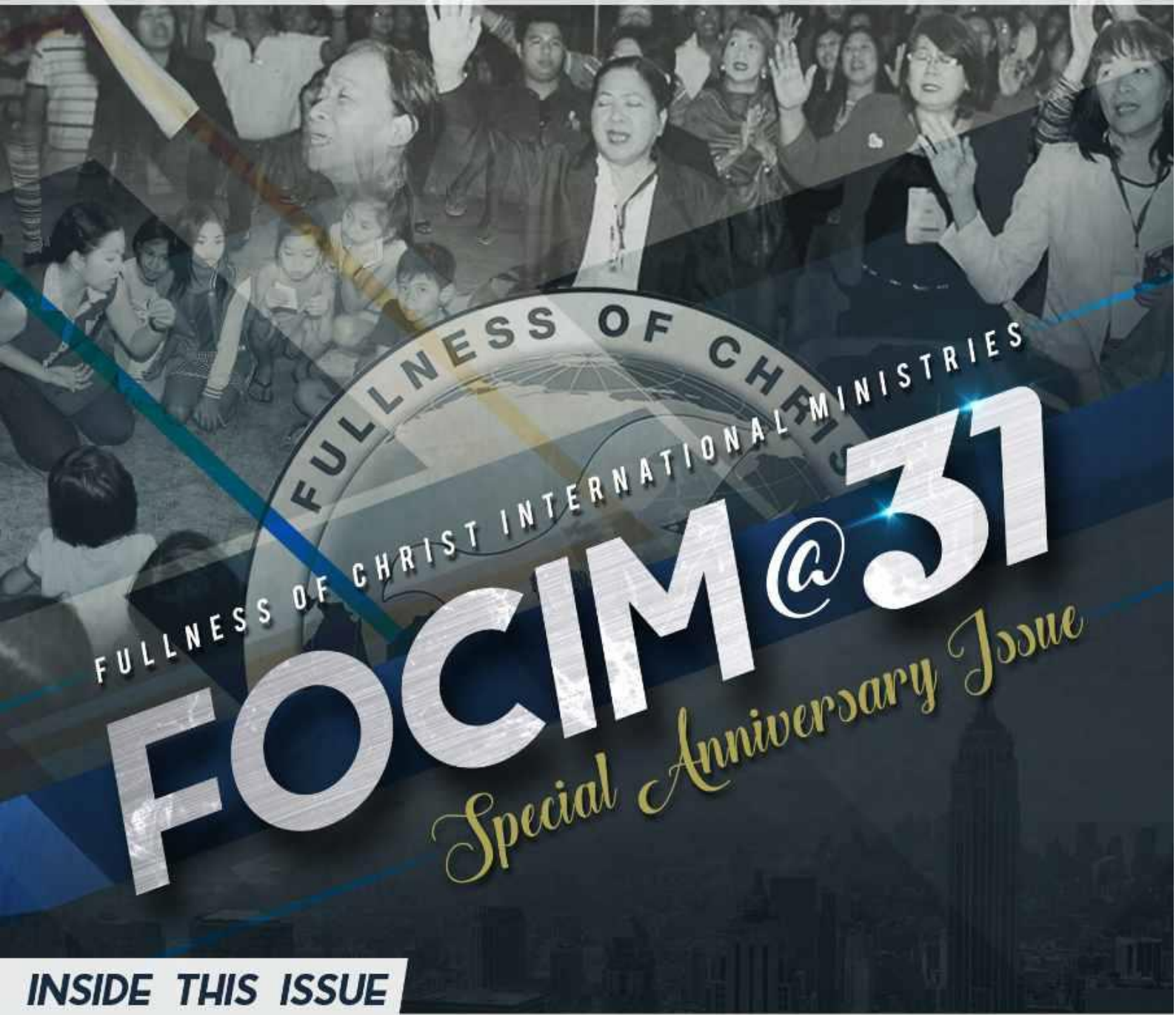




# The MENORAH

The Official Publication of the Fullness of Christ International Ministries



# FOCIM@31

Special Anniversary Issue

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## A Supernatural Challenge to a Supernatural Church from a Supernatural God (Revelations 11:15)

The faithfulness of God is true and has been proven many times in His relationship with His church. But it seems that in our relationship with Him, He is the only one faithful. He is the only one who's been doing his part in proving how much He loves and cares for us. Have you ever asked yourself, "Am I really a faithful servant of God?" "Do I really obey my Father's commands?" "What have I done to show my Father how much I love Him?" God has been challenging us to live a life of total surrender in accordance to His will. It is His desire for us to witness supernatural things which are far greater than what we have experienced in the past 30 years. This year, as we celebrate another year of His faithfulness, our supernatural God has given us a supernatural challenge to be what He has destined us to be - a supernatural church.

God's supernatural power resides in all of us, but it requires a life of dedication, obedience, and surrender. Loving God means letting Him take the wheel. We entrust our lives to Him and make Him the center of our lives. By loving Him genuinely, His love overflows from our hearts and His supernatural power penetrates our spirits. The same power that has been given by the Father also lives in us through our personal union with Christ. (Hebrews 6:5). Aside from giving us a new spirit, this power produces a transformed life through the sanctification process (1 Peter 1:5). This power allows us to experience a life of abundance, sanctification, and victory over our flesh and of the enemy. Sanctification leads to partaking, partaking to overcoming, and overcoming to inheriting.

What good is it to know God's will for us if we don't have the power to perform it? His power enables us to do what His Word demands. With God's supernatural power, we are able to execute the impossible. The supernatural power of God within us grant us the desire to seek and save the lost, heal the sick, set the oppressed and captives free, and to fellowship with others in giving glory to Jesus, our Living God.

We are now His representatives, His ambassadors, who have been given power and authority to speak and act on His behalf (2 Corinthians 5:20)! God has given our church everything we need to fulfill our destiny. He imparts His supernatural power to each of us from the moment that we believe in Him. With this, we, too, can overcome the enemy, proclaim the message of the gospel, produce the "fruit of the Spirit" and persevere until the end. He teaches us how to live our lives through His Word and gives us the power to live through His Spirit. Ephesians 3:14-16 says, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of who the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man."

Right now, God is looking for people who will simply believe Him enough to align themselves in His purposes. We became God's ideal vessel of supernatural power by the time we got born again. His Holy Spirit enabled us to fulfill all His will here on earth. Let us not shortchange ourselves any longer nor allow negative thoughts and beliefs to tell us that we are unworthy or incapable of doing what our God told us to do. We are now a part of His Supernatural Gospel, and we have been given nine wonderful Gifts of the Holy Spirit to enable us to function in supernatural ways (1 Corinthians 12). For every time we step out in exercising a Spiritual Gift, we are ministering His Spirit to people. We are releasing the Spirit of God to do supernatural things when we are working together as one church together with the Holy Spirit and His Gifts! We experience the supernatural power of God when we work together as one family in Christ, in love and unity.

# Changed Lives, Changed Hearts: FOCIM Holds First Water Baptism for 2017

By Daniel Alberto G. Guinigundo

“

*Going under the water was a burial of your old life; coming up out of it was a resurrection, God raising you from the dead as he did Christ. When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive—right along with Christ! Think of it! All sins forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's cross.” Colossians 2:12-14*

Twenty members from both FOCIM-Mandaluyong and FOCIM Quezon City publicly declared their faith by going through water baptism last 13 May 2017 at the North Susana Executive Village Clubhouse.

Senior Pastor Diwa C. Guinigundo administered the Baptism. The candidates for baptism were a blend of old and new: Hannah Faith Abla, Arbie Andone, Zyleen Shane Barredo, Arjohn Garcia, Arcela Gelogo, John Gabriel Lactao, and Milleth Loreto are all in training to be future members of the Worship Team, while Carla Nicer is a new member of the Ushering Ministry. The others who were baptized were Vanessa Bolo, Edwin Cerveza, Ken Axel Cerveza, Angela De Jesus, Steve De Jesus, Rey Anne Figueroa, Angelica Galang, Ashlee Faith Jabonillo, John David Lactao, John Carlo Pacquiao, Alexandra Sarmiento, and John Anthony So.

Before the baptism, participating members were oriented on the meaning and relevance of water baptism and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Attended by elders of the Ministry Team and the Worship Team, everyone was invited to encounter God through few songs of praise led by Bro. Daniel Guinigundo, Bro. Abraham Guinigundo, and Sis. Patricia Unite. After a short prayer by Sis. Apple Guinigundo and a short exhortation by Bro. Diwa Guinigundo, each of the candidates was baptized in water. After the water baptism, each of them was also baptized through the Holy Spirit. Declarations of blessing and favor were also released. After the closing prayer, everyone joined in fellowship over breakfast to celebrate the decision of all the participants to take the first step in their faith journey.

Having not only been baptized in water, but also in the Holy Spirit, it will not be a surprise if these new Christians would take more steps forward in their journey with Christ.





# SUBMERGED IN GOD'S LOVE: WHAT EVERYONE OUGHT TO KNOW ABOUT VBS 2017

by Hannah Cecilia S. Luching

LAST 20 and 27 May 2017, the sanctuaries of both FOCIM-Mandaluyong and FOCIM-Quezon City were transformed into simulated underwater parks. Sceneries of above water and under the sea were shown at the annual Vacation Bible School (VBS) of the Children's Sunday School. Led by the academics committee head, Sis. Mariela Reyes, the event centered around the theme "Submerged", which focused on developing the children's relationship with Jesus Christ. *"As the attendees submerged themselves into His Word through our lessons, artwork, and games, they will discover how much He cares for them,"* said Sis. Mariela.

The attendees were divided into three groups depending on their ages-- children from ages 5 to 12 years old got a memorable experience in the lush tropical life in Beginner's Island; diverse marine life in the Kiddie Reef; and the mystical journey of the deep sea with SS Victory Submarine.

Teachers from both Mandaluyong and Quezon City organized and communicated the plan two months ahead of schedule. Sis. Patricia Unite, one of the teachers said, *"each teacher was assigned a committee and everyone was also assigned to raise funds for the event."* This year marks the launch of a

separate VBS for FOCIM-Quezon City. In the past, the outreach would normally join the VBS classes in Mandaluyong.

Both FOCIM-Mandaluyong and FOCIM-Quezon City followed a standardized format in terms of curriculum and activity. The teachers taught the children stories from the Bible—Noah and the Great Flood for those in the Beginner's Island, Jonah and the Big Whale for the Kiddie Reef attendees, and Jesus Walks on Water for the children in the SS Victory Submarine class, all of which led to the need for a Savior. To give them a chance to show their creative side, they were also given a time for arts and crafts.

The VBS was concluded during the Recognition Program the following day for FOCIM-Mandaluyong and in the afternoon of the same day for FOCIM-Quezon City. Students were also awarded for demonstrating excellence and participation in their respective classes in memorizing Bible verses and producing creative artwork. With 43 students in FOCIM-Mandaluyong and 51 students from in FOCIM-Quezon City, the VBS this year was a resounding success. With the attendees having been submerged in His love, we can expect the Sunday School to produce yet another successful summer activity for the children next year.



# Dare to Dream and Activate: The Gen-C Launches A New Series for Vertical

By Raphael Luke G. Cuello and Allyssa V. Paranas

DARE. For this year, the Generation for Christ Youth Ministry, Gen-C, launched a new series for its quarterly youth service that would hopefully both challenge and encourage the youth to do more for His kingdom. Each letter stands for an aspect of a young person's life- Dare, Activate, Represent, and Empower.

The first service centered on dreaming big for God. Held last April 29 at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, it was more than the usual worship, testimony, and delivery of the Word. Sis. Rhodora Faune, a member of the Blithe Ushering Ministry, gave a heartwarming testimony, demonstrating how a person can only get from rock bottom to the mountain top by relying on God's strength to fulfill one's dreams. After an anointed song number from Bro. Nigel Delgado, the Word was delivered by guest speaker, Sis. Mae Angelique Mijares, an engineer and teacher by profession and a member of Victory Christian Fellowship. Centering on dreaming with and for God, Sis. Mae fueled the attendees' passion to go outside and go beyond of their comfort zone to see what God has in store for them once they believe that impossible dreams are possible. She likewise inspired everyone with how she was introduced to Jesus and how it changed her life and her decisions thus far.

The second vertical service, which focused on activating the gifts and talents we possess for God, was equally successful and fruitful. After a short icebreaker and an inspirational message from Sis. Louver Jannel Arada, one of the Gen-C counselors for spiritual growth, Bro. Woodrow Young gave a compelling testimony on how he was changed by God and how he used his gifts for the Blithe Ushering Ministry, the Children's Sunday School, and the Menorah. Demonstrating God's move in their lives, young people Sis. Jamesha De Guzman, Bro. Geneross Hubilla, and Bro. Henri Luching gave a special number. The Word was delivered by none other than Worship Generation co-founder, Bro. Kirk Chester Damasco, who shared how he got to know Christ and how he deepened his faith walk with him as he activated his giftings by using his management and entrepreneurial skills for the sharing of the gospel; *"Offer your life first, and as God control your lives, God will activate your giftings"*

With two more services to close the year, we can expect that the attendees will be fully equipped to take on the challenge of daring to dream big and daring to use their gifts for His glory.



# Financial Freedom for Couples

By Roanna Lynn G. Santos



The Fullness of Christ Couple's Ministry, headed by Bro. Elso and Sis. Vicky Cabangon, hosted a talk on "Financial Freedom for Married Couples," with Bro. Ardy Roberto and his wife, actress, model and former Beauty Queen, Sis. Miriam Quiambao-Roberto, as special guests. Among the 50 attendees last June 23, 2017 were married couples from different homechurches, including some single men and women were also eager to learn from the Christian couple.

**Bro. Ardy** began by sharing four lessons: 1) *"Volt-in" finances*. He encouraged combining or merging couple's money, including bank accounts; 2) *Use same language*. Start changing "mine" to "ours;" 3) *Choose your friends wisely*. They will influence your thinking; and 4) *Make agreements together*. Before buying anything, "agree to PRAY, before you PAY." He reminded everyone the importance of praying to God first, since 'we do not really own the money that we have here on earth.' He emphasizes the need for God's wisdom to have a healthy mindset on the combination of both money and marriage. On a lighter side of things, he jokingly warned the crowd to avoid "sale" as the word stands for, "Stay Away, Look Elsewhere!"

**Sis. Miriam** shared her story on how at a very young age, she was taught by her parents to start saving money already. This practice continued until she got older. After a failed relationship from her first husband which resulted in an empty life and pockets, she was then introduced to living a life centered on Jesus Christ. Since then, her life has never been the same, especially after she got married to Bro. Ardy, who shares her advocacy on financial freedom. Sis. Miriam explained her "Money Jar System," which helped her allocate monthly funds into three categories: 1) *Love Offering* – Money that is given to church; 2) *Growth* – This involves looking for ways to invest and setting-up an "emergency fund;" and lastly, 3) *Spend* – Money to buy needs and pay off bills.

Financial freedom is about being free from all worries and fears caused by anything that involves money such as debts and monthly payables. The Lord wants us all – whether married or single - to be financially free. The Storehouse Principle talks of this in Deuteronomy 28:8, *"The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you."*

The 4-hour talk ended with an awarding of Certificates of Appreciation to our guest speakers, presented by Bro. Elso and Sis. Vicky Cabangon, as well as Bro. Robert Lee and Sis. Sophie Guerrero. After being blessed by the FOCIM elders, Bro. Ardy and Sis. Miriam conducted a short book-signing activity which featured some of the books they had authored.

Clearly, it is the Lord's will to bless His people. But first, we have to be good stewards with God's blessings. According to our guest speakers, stewardship is responsible management. It is about being careful in handling what we have been given. If we understand this principle, we can never go wrong in handling our finances. The Bible reminds us in Psalms 24:1, *"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."*

# ENLARGE

## TAKING THE CITY AND BEYOND: ENLARGE HOLDS ITS THIRD EDITION THIS 2017

By Woodrow Wilson C. Young

MANDALUYONG is now popularly called the “Tiger City” of Metro Manila due to its transformation into an important industrial and residential enclave and its unprecedented growth and progress during the last decade. There is no doubt that the Lord has a great plan for the city. True to His plans, it was no accident that the third edition of Enlarge: Financial Literacy Summit, was held in Mandaluyong. FOCIM, along with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Mandaluyong Christian Churches Association (MCCA), and the City Government, organized the event. Held last July 1, 2017 at Kaban ng Hiyas, Mandaluyong City, Enlarge’s objective was to help equip and transform its participants by enabling them to experience financial abundance through learning key financial principles in building true wealth. The venue was jampacked, with more than 500 participants, mostly key local government officials of Mandaluyong City and their staff .

First speaker was Bro. Broderick Santos. Bro. Bodge is the head of the Well Ministries of FOCIM and founder of FOCIM’s Kingdom Circle Workplace Ministry. Harping on the importance of knowing and using our God-given talent and strength to create wealth, he emphasized that we should use our gifts to serve others and become faithful stewards of our wealth. The next speaker was Bro. Randell Tiongson, a well-known author and lecturer. A Registered Financial Planner, he shared the importance of having the right perspective, attitude and discipline in achieving financial freedom him. The audience learned from him that although money is a great tool, it is not the end goal. Bro. Randell said that financial planning without knowledge of the Gospel is a hard task.

### KABAN NG HIYAS, MANDALUYONG CITY



JULY 1, 2017 • SATURDAY • 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM  
KABAN NG HIYAS, MANDALUYONG CITY







The third speaker, Ms. Eleanor Ramos, was from the BSP and was the assigned officer on the CSF (Credit Surety Fund). Ms. Eleanor shared details of CSF objectives, stressing that this BSP initiative aims to provide opportunities for small businesses with potential to become medium or large-scale businesses through loans without collateral and credit history.

She was followed by Ms. Miriam Quiambao, a former beauty queen and current tv host. Miriam stressed that managing resources is key to building wealth. She shared her very own “Money Jar system” which taught the participants how to allocate their income to different expense items and generate savings. She emphasized the need to honor God through giving. She shared that God increases our standard of living to increase our standard of giving. She encouraged the participants to make the act of giving a habit.

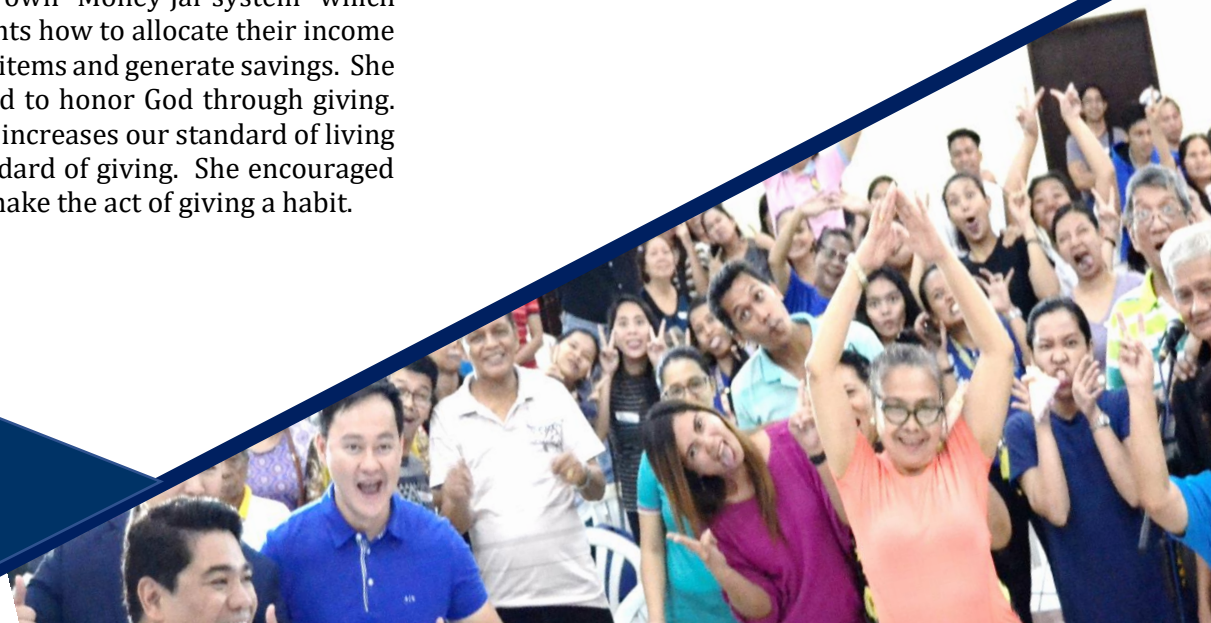
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The fourth speaker was Mr. Paulo Tibig who is an entrepreneur champion and motivational speaker. Mr. Paulo focused on the value of developing an entrepreneur’s mindset in order to achieve financial freedom. Further, Mr. Paulo encouraged them to start and manage their own businesses to achieve financial freedom.

The last speaker was Bro. Marvin Geromo, author of the bestselling book “Stock Smart”. Bro. Marvin talked about the importance of knowing the basics of investing, particularly on the stock market. He gave his audience a clearer picture of what the stock market is and emphasized the need for Filipinos to take advantage of the strong Philippine economy by investing in the stock market.

This event was significant for Mandaluyong as it provided an opportunity to change the landscape of this city. This can be considered as the city’s first step towards its transformation into a kingdom of God. Furthermore, it allowed FOCIM to penetrate the city by sharing God’s Word and in the process dedicate Mandaluyong to the Lord. Mandaluyong will be the prototype city for all the other cities to follow. With the success of this year’s Enlarge, and its warm reception in the city, the horizon truly remains bright for the launch of the summit in other areas, with hopes of contributing to the peoples’ financial freedom.





# ENLARGE — THE FINANCIAL LITERACY JOURNEY<sup>1</sup>

By Ma. Lourdes N. Colinares



Broderick “**Bodge**” C. Santos

“

Are you ready to experience financial abundance like never before?” This question is displayed in bold letters in the television monitor at church. The background music is upbeat and it’s year 2015.

“Yes, I am ready!” I answer in my mind.

“Are you ready to be blessed?” This question, on the other hand, is addressed to the congregation.

“Yup, I am ready!” I once again answer in my mind.

It is announcement time in the Fullness of Christ International Ministries (FOCIM) and Bro. Broderick “Bodge” C. Santos, 41 years old, stands in front of the church.

Bro. Bodge is a man full of vim and vigor. He speaks with confidence and carries an aura of contagious positivity. As he announces an event entitled Enlarge where basic money management, financial planning, and investment will be discussed, I, an impulsive spender with minimal knowledge on finance, could not help but feel excited myself.

Fast forward to today, year 2017, FOCIM has prayed over, prepared for, and witnessed the planning and execution of three victorious Enlarge: Financial Literacy Summits.

Financial literacy albeit taught differently—this is what Enlarge has to offer. Veering away from the usual wealth seminars, Enlarge infuses Christian values in every lecture given throughout each summit.

Asking the same questions, “Are you ready to experience financial abundance like never before?” and “Are you ready to be blessed?” we now have Bro. Bodge to tell us how this financial literacy journey began and that it has only just begun.

<sup>1</sup> Title by Bro. Broderick C.



### The beginning

Bro. Bodge is no stranger to the world of finance. Apart from his job as a top senior bank executive, he acts as a wealth & sales management adviser, and is also the founder of Kingdom Circle Workplace.

“More than five years ago,” Bro. Bodge shares, “God has impressed in my spirit this verse which has been the core of this life changing project *‘Isaiah 54:2 (NKJV) – Enlarge the place of your tent, And then let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; do not spare; Lengthen cords, And strengthen your stakes.’*”

Enumerating a number of blessings the Lord has given the Philippine economy such as stellar stock market performance, all time high foreign direct investment, low inflation rate, and investment grade credit rating, Bro. Bodge believes that “God wants to release upon our nation His supernatural overflow but His people are not catching the fullness of His blessings in all fronts of our economy.”

Referring to a study conducted by MasterCard, he says that despite the strong economic performance of Philippines, the country ranks as one of the lowest in terms of financial literacy in the whole Asia Pacific region.

The issue, according to him, lies in the people’s lack of knowledge.

### The adventure

Organizing an event as ambitious as Enlarge is not child’s play.

Bro. Bodge shares that he faced a lot of personal struggles during the journey. An example was working around a limited budget, resources, and connections to usher such a big event.

These limitations did not deter him from pushing forward.

“By His grace and unlimited provision, we have conquered every challenge that the enemy tried to throw at us. For every challenge that we surrendered up to Him, He has blessed us with more promotions and provisions,” Bro. Bodge says.

With that, Enlarge has been blessed with strong partners such as the FOCIM, Kingdom Circle, Mandaluyong Christian Churches Association (MCCA), Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), and BSP Christian Fellowship.

Moreover, the summit has a core group of influential speakers such as FOCIM Senior Pastor and BSP Deputy Governor Diwa C. Guinigundo, best-selling authors and registered financial planners namely Randell Tiongson and Marvin Germa, media personality Miriam Quiambao, and Bro. Bodge himself.

When asked how it feels to have successfully organized three Enlarge summits, Bro. Bodge says, “It’s priceless! Such an honor to serve God so I can glorify Him and enjoy His presence forever.”



## The destination

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# Ready? Set. ACTS!

By Ma. Lourdes N. Colinares

Brothers and sisters, stretch those muscles and prepare to break a sweat for a new ministry is up and running! Or rather, will get you running!

Exciting, exhilarating, and you will definitely be perspiring – this new ministry promises to bring out the athlete in you, all for the glory of God.

ACTS, which stands for "Advancing Christ Through Sports," is the Fullness of Christ International Ministries's (FOCIM) first ministry solely dedicated to sports and overall wellness.

Formed by Bro. Dan Abraham "Abe" G. Guinigundo and Bro. Edward Matthew "Chu" D. Unite, ACTS is sure to bring in so much fun.

The decision to start the ministry came long before its formal organization.

"We believe the timing had a lot to do with the growing number of active youth in FOCIM," Bro. Abe says.

"To be candid," he shares, "we actually started scheduling pick-up basketball games among the youth and we were quite surprised with the turn-out of participants. The rest is history."

All FOCIM members ages thirteen (13) and above are encouraged to join ACTS.

According to Bro. Abe, ACTS was also inspired by the past sports fests, which were only held by the church once every two years or so. "We were always fascinated by the competitive spirit of the members of FOCIM," Bro. Abe says.

"All FOCIM members are competitive when it comes to sports," Bro. Chu says in agreement. They discovered that the members of FOCIM needed a more regular and frequent outlet to play and even learn new sports.

"ACTS is committed to promoting health and wellness to our members through sports," Bro. Abe says. "Our vision is to cultivate relationships, inspire camaraderie, and encourage an active lifestyle among our members while advancing the gospel," he continues.

The ministry's mission is to provide a regular avenue for fellowship through participation in sports activities and in the process achieve goals such as the discovery of athletic abilities and giftings, encourage discipline and excellence, and foster teamwork and sportsmanship.

Teaching the members to preserve a Christ-like character under pressure is likewise one major objective for ACTS, according to Bro. Abe.



## FOCIM SPORTS MINISTRY ACTS - ADVANCING CHRIST THROUGH SPORTS



“We are also looking at inviting visitors with the view of eventually leading them to Christ,” he says.

Of course, playing sports incurs some expenses. This aspect has already been taken in consideration by Bro. Abe and Bro. Chu.

“Initially, the church will provide the budget for the venue but in the long run we also want to generate our own funds so that our activities will not be depended to church funding,” Bro. Chu says.

In fact, Bro. Abe says that one mission of ACTS is to assist in the numerical growth of FOCIM.

According to Bro. Chu, on special cases, the ministry might require registration fees. This may be applicable for some of the activities being organized such as fun runs, bowling, and wall climbing. “Unlike team sports, these kinds of activities are too costly for the church to shoulder alone,” Bro. Chu says.

To date, members of ACTS are eagerly awaiting the announcement of its very first event.

“The major challenge is setting up the schedule of games. As much as possible, we want to involve everyone especially members who are mostly not active in other church activities,” Bro. Chu shares.

According to him, ACTS is planning to set games for basketball, volleyball and badminton within the year.

“During our General Assembly, we’ve already assigned committee heads who are in charge of organizing these sports. Hopefully we can have its first game after the church anniversary,” Bro. Chu says.

Addressing the members of the church, Bro. Chu says, “I encourage and welcome everyone to sign up and participate as soon as we open up the registration for our activities.” #



# A Movie Review

From the same studio that produced the 2014 break-out film “God’s Not Dead” comes “The Case for Christ,” a movie adaptation of the bestselling book of the same title. The film, which is based on true events, depicts the life experience of Lee Strobel in his search for evidence of Jesus Christ in the fields of science, philosophy, and history.

Strobel is a former atheist who received a journalism degree from the University of Missouri and a Master of Studies degree from Yale Law School. His conversion to the faith came while he was working as a journalist for The Chicago Tribune, initially in an attempt to disprove Biblical claims about Christ after his wife, Leslie, converted to Christianity. Throughout his search for evidence, which spanned for almost two years, Strobel utilized his journalistic and legal skills and conducted various interviews of scholars. Faced with the hard evidence that he had gathered, Strobel became a Christian in November 1981. Since then, he has written many other books for Christian apologetics and became a pastor for Willow Creek Community Church in Illinois, USA.

“The Case for Christ” resonates across the lives of many Christian converts who, at some point in their lives, were bold enough to pursue their doubts—wherever they would lead. Although the basic plot of the movie is familiar, the narrative is quite unique; Strobel begins as the antagonist, driven by his desire to discredit the Christian religion, and ends up disproving his entire hypothesis. At its core, the film is largely evangelical as it seeks to dispel doubts of non-believers and introduce them to Christ. Despite this, the execution remains subtle and genuine, which has been a challenge for studios producing religious movies. Over all, “the Case for Christ” is a strong addition to Pure Flix Entertainment’s line-up of independent Christian films and is expected to rank among the best in the genre for the years to come.

The movie was released worldwide on April 7, 2017 and has a 79% rating in *rottentomatoes.com* as of this writing.

By Dan Abraham G. Guinigundo

## THE CASE FOR CHRIST

SONGS INSPIRED BY THE ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE

DREAM

PURE FLIX

# Album Review: Let There Be Light by Hillsong Worship

by Nigel John C. Delgado

**Number One: Back In The Scene.** One might wonder why the lead singer in the songs "Lead Me To The Cross," "Hosanna," and "Desert Song" went missing since 2010. Previously out of the scene due to personal projects, the Australian singer and songwriter Brooke Fraser-Ligertwood is reunited with her brothers and sisters in Christ to once again deliver wonderful songs. Co-written by Brooke Fraser-Ligertwood and Ben Fielding is "**What A Beautiful Name**," which has become the anthem song of the album because of its powerful and bold lyrics like "You didn't want heaven without us/So Jesus, You brought heaven down", and its strong melodic structure. Alongside it comes "**Behold (Then Sings My Soul)**", "**Grace to Grace**" and the title track "**Let There Be Light**" all of which will let the listener meditate and be intimate with Jesus from heart to mouth declaration of one's love and prayers to Him.

**Number Two: The Message.** Hillsong songwriters Joel Houston, Marty Sampson, Rueben Morgan, Ben Fielding, Matt Crocker, Brooke Ligertwood and many others have always been outstanding in composing songs that are Bible-based and true to the Gospel. The album is a message and confession of faith because of its poetic and faithful lyrics from the tracks "**Your Word**", "**Elohim**," and "**I Will Boast In Christ**" (a song that interweaves with the popular hymn "**Nothing But The Blood**"). For sure, many will fall more deeply in love with Jesus because of the message carried by these songs. Those weak in spirit at this time will find themselves strengthened, empowered and with eyes refocused on God.

**Number Three: A Reason To Celebrate.** Whether it's a small or big achievement, there will always be a reason to celebrate. Like what Jesus did on the cross and after three days in the tomb, rising from the dead and living a model life, is a clear manifestation that He gives hope and light to those who are lost in darkness. The tracks "**Love So Great**", "**Look To The Son**", "**Crowns**", "**In Control**" and "**As It Is (In Heaven)**" highlight the hope and the reason to celebrate – Jesus; that in everything, He is in control, He is faithful, and that He loved us, found us and saved us.

Listening to this album will definitely encourage the audience to continue pursuing and walking with God because it talks about the supremacy of Jesus Christ – Our Hope, our King, and our Savior. The verse Isaiah 60:19 comes to mind: "*The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.*"

No darkness in His endless light.



let there be light.



# A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO KOREAN

By Anna Pamela U. Young

# B A N C H A N



If you've ever eaten at a Korean restaurant, you're sure to have been served those delicious, complimentary sides. But what are those tiny portions of bright red squares, shiny noodles and dehydrated somethin's called exactly?

Those small plates of goodness are actually called "banchan," which translates to "side dishes." They are served ahead of the main course, but they're not just appetizers. They're snacks-within-a-meal that can be eaten as complements, contrasts, and condiments at the same time.

Given that they're not typically listed on the menu (and there are a dizzying number of them!), here's a list of *banchan* that you're most likely to encounter in Philippine restaurants. Study up and soon enough you'll be able to order them by name.

## 1. BAECHU KIMCHI

*Kimchi* is a common Korean dish made of fermented vegetables and spices. There are hundreds of varieties of kimchi but it is commonly made from napa cabbage (as shown in the picture). It's almost always on the table, and can be eaten on its own or as an ingredient in everything from soups to fried rice. Pair it with a piece of meat on your wrap for a spicy-and-savory pop of flavor or throw some of it on the grill! Get the kimchee all mixed up in there and then get ready to blast your taste buds to food heaven.

## 2. MYEOLCHI BOKKEUM (Stir-fried dried anchovies)

This side dish is a popular one in Korea. It's crispy, nutrient-dense and has a nice mix of sweet and salty, thanks to ingredients like honey (or another sweetener), garlic and sesame oil.

## 3. OJINGEOCHAE MUCHIM (Dried shredded squid)

Like jerky, it's chewy, spicy and also pulls off that delicious dual taste of salty and sweet. This little dish is often eaten with rice.

## 4. SUKJU NAMUL (Marinated mung bean sprouts)

This salad is pretty simple – the recipe calls for mung bean sprouts, salt, garlic and a bit of sesame oil. It's crunchy and it's fresh.

## 5. JAPCHAE (Stir-fried glass noodles)

These slippery noodles are made from sweet potatoes and are stir-fried in sesame oil. They are often mixed with vegetables and meat and can be eaten either hot or cold. It can also be consumed as a main dish.

## 6. AJI NAMUL (Soy-Marinated Eggplant)

Light-steamed eggplant marinated in soy sauce, sugar and sesame oil.

## 7. SIGEUMCHI NAMUL (Spinach Salad)

Sigeumchi namul is a simple Korean side dish made of blanched spinach seasoned with soy sauce, garlic, and sesame oil. It's also one of the main toppings for bibimbap.

## 8. DUBU BUCHIM (Pan-fried Tofu)

It is simply fried tofu with a savory and spicy blend of special sauce.

# Top 5 Mountains for Beginners

By Rosalie Chavez Faune

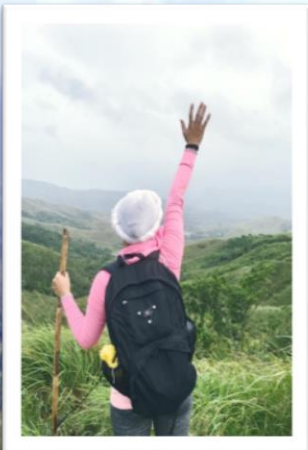
There are different types of nature lover. There are those who love the go to the beach and feel the ocean breeze while some grow their own garden and watch the plants blossom. Moreover, there are those who have a heart for adventure. They love the excitement that exploring the nature brings. Among all of these, I consider myself as an adventure junkie. Nothing makes me feel closer to God and His creation other than climbing mountains and running trails. Climbing mountain (in any sense) is not as easy as pie. People do it for different reasons but I am certain that it gives everyone a sense of satisfaction. I recommend these top five mountains for adventure seekers like you.

## 1. Mt. Batulao (Nasugbu, Batangas)

Aside from its cool weather and beautiful landscape, Mt. Batulao is very accessible for hikers. In order to have a full-packed experience, it's best to travel early in the morning and get to spend the afternoon for a post climb meal in Tagaytay with its plethora of food choices. Mt. Batulao has two major trails - the old and the new. This makes it one of the most popular day hikes. Its trails are primarily rough roads, then it will bring you to paths that are well-maintained, taking you up and down, first gradually, and then the slopes will be more pronounced later. After 20 minutes of trekking you will reach the 1st hut where they sell fresh buko juice. The Everest Gold Course is where you will find the 3rd hut which is the main jump off point. The landscapes of Batulao are quite remarkable. It is best for those who wants to try mountain climbing for the first time because it makes a very good training climb. My first time in this mountain served as training for my first ever race in the trail run. It was drizzling at that time which made our run a bit challenging. It is wise to check the weather before planning a climb especially if it is your first time because its trail can be muddy during the wet season and can be very hot and humid during summer. January to February are the best months to climb. At the peak, you will see the majestic beauty of Batangas which include the peninsula of Calatagan, the coastline of Nasugbu, Tagaytay Highlands, the famous Taal Lake, the massive Balayan Bay and other mountains such as Mt. Talamitam, the mountains of Maragondon, Cavite and Mt. Maculot.

## 2. Mt. Ulap (Itogon, Benguet)

Among all of my day hikes, Mt. Ulap is one of the most challenging yet rewarding climb I ever had. Not having enough rest before the hike (which I am not recommending) and climbing the steep path to the jump-off left me breathless and made me want to give up although we haven't started the climb yet. If you are to hike this mountain, bring an infinite amount of patience with you. Its trails may be less grueling than the other mountains but the long walks along ridges can still take up much of your time and energy, making you feel like the hike is taking way longer than necessary. But knowing what Mt. Ulap has to offer, I was able to continue until I have conquer this mountain. If you want to try a day hike away from Manila's heat, Mt. Ulap will suit you well. Situated in Itogon, Benguet, this mountain is known for its scenic view of the Cordilleras while trekking the grassland and pine tree ridges. If you have been blessed with good weather, you can even see Mt. Arayat, Mt. Ugo and Mt. Pulag. The way to the first peak was really a challenge but after reaching it, the next peaks seem easier to reach. You can complete the hike in 4-6 hours, which makes it possible as a day hike or even a half-day hike for all types of hikers. The Mt. Ulap Eco-Trail in Itogon, Benguet is the perfect day hike from Baguio City, only 40 minutes away from Burnham Park by public jeepney. Spanning around 8 kilometres through several peaks along the Ampucao-Sta. Fe Ridge. The trailhead starts along from the road to Philex in Brgy. Ampucao, but hikers have to make a 10-minute detour to the barangay hall to register and secure guides. The trail goes up a ridgeline that is immediately surrounded by pines, and soon becomes scenic with views of Mt. Sto. Tomas and Baguio City.



### 3. MT. BATOLUSONG (Tanay, Rizal)

Mt. Batolusong is just one of the many potential hiking destinations in Tanay. It is one of the 'latest hits' in the local hiking scene, its proximity to Manila spurring a flood of interest in the mountain. It is situated in Brgy. San Andres, Tanay, Rizal (major jump-off), with an estimated elevation of up to 670 meters above sea level. There is another jump-off area in Sitio Kayibon near the falls that you can visit as a side trip. Likewise, the trail is very nice from San Andres, passing through some interesting rock formations, and featuring a nice ascent through woodlands up to the Duhatan Ridge leading to Mapatag Plateau. Mapatag Plateau (645m) can be the final endpoint of the hike; it is a grassland slope that serves as a scenic viewpoint and a possible campsite. Actually, for some locals, "Batolusong" refers to this plateau and the valley next to it. According to local guides, the place was named Mt. Batolusong because of the bato or rocks that the natives used for cooking. The first part of the trail is walk in the park, passing some rice paddies then woodland.

There's no cellular signal throughout the trail. Upon reaching the summit, you will be enthralled by the beauty of the surroundings, the beauty of Sierra Madre mountain range at its best. One can also see the Talim Island, including Mt. Makiling, Mt. Banahaw, Mt. Cristobal and Mt. Irid as the highest point of Rizal. After enjoying the cool breeze and being able to pose for some photo opp, you can head to the nearby Kayibon Falls which is the most popular side trip to the place where the water is so cold and clear. Dipping into the falls was a very refreshing moment, a natural reward after the long hours of hike. It's also close to the highway so you can just exit from there instead of going back to the registration area.

### 4. CAYABU-MAYNOBA LOOP (Tanay, Rizal)

Possibly the mountain with the utmost success rate of viewing the sea of clouds of all the Rizal Mountains, Mt. Maynoba was an instant hit from its opening as a hiking destination in early 2016. Its easy enough to do in a few hours and reachable from Metro Manila by private transport in an hour or two, this mountain at the foothills of the Sierra Madre in Tanay, Rizal offers magnificent views of the Sierra Madre mountains, and enough variety in the trail to sustain one's interest throughout the loop hike – from a steep, forested ascent up the so-called "Mt. Cayabu" (which is actually more of a subsidiary peak of Maynoba), a verdant, open trek at the higher reaches, and a descent through woodland that ends in a small river system with a good number of waterfalls. The trail to the summit, though precipitous at times, is upfront, and merits a 3/9 difficulty classification. The hike down the waterfalls, however, has short sections of trekking on rocks, adding to the challenge and therefore increasing the difficulty to 4/9 if doing the entire hike. During the rainy season, muddiness is bound to be an additional consideration. At the summit, there are beautiful northern views of Mt. Tukduang Banoi and Mt. Irid, with the valley of Sta. Ines in between them, and to the east, the Sierra Madre mountains bordering Tanay and the towns of Infanta and Gen. Nakar in Quezon Province. These mountains are scenic by themselves, but they are made much more so when viewing the sun rise above them, with the sea of clouds that for some reason found home in the valleys that surround beautiful Mt. Maynoba. Climbing Maynoba Circuit entails climbing both Mt. Maynoba and Mt. Cayabu and a chance to see and take a dip on an eight waterfalls while descending back to jump off. Aside from climbing two mountains on a day hike and seeing eight waterfalls you can also witness a sea of clouds if you leave at midnight and start your trek at dawn.

### 5. Mt. Pulag (Bokod, Benguet)

Being a first time climber back in 2013, I didn't know what made me think if climbing a mountain. I'm not talking about just any other mountain but the highest mountain in Luzon and 3rd highest mountain in the Philippines. Maybe it's because the place is relatively more accessible than other mountains. Maybe it's because of word-of-mouth. Whatever the reasons were, Mt. Pulag has become one of the most popular choices for people who want to go up a mountain. Climbers often call Mt. Pulag "the playground of the gods" because of its breathtaking views and magnificent sceneries. These same views and sceneries have attracted both veteran climbers and beginners to brave the long and frigid trek to the mountain's summit. Mount Pulag's peak is 2,922 meters above sea level and has 4 major trails to the summit, namely for Benguet: the Ambangeg (for beginners), Akiki, and Tawangan, and from Nueva Vizcaya, the Ambaguio trail. Locals consider the place to be sacred and believe that the spirits of their ancestors reside in the mountain itself. Mt. Pulag is a protected area and so a short stop at the DENR station is required to all hikers and tourists for a brief orientation. A ride to the so-called "monster jeep" and adventure to the steep and rough road is necessary to reach the ranger station, the last place where electricity, food, and comfort rooms are readily available so it is advisable to make all the final preparations here.



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Hikers, beginners in particular, usually go up the mountain by taking the Ambageg trail which is easier and usually takes three to four hours to finish. While seasoned climbers and physically fit individuals would probably have no problems climbing the Akiki Trail which is more challenging and could last for days. The Ambageg trail has three campsites. It is easy to tell when you are about to reach the next camp because the terrain changes as you hike your way up. The path to the first camp is wide, stony, and dusty. Even so, the area is rich with all kinds of trees and flora. You also get a view of the cabbage and carrot plots planted by the residents below. After reaching Camp 1, however, the surroundings got colder and darker, the ground got muddier, and mossy plants became more plenty. This part of the trail is also less steep compared to the other ones, making it one of my favorite parts of the whole trek. The view was breathless upon reaching the second camp. Everything in sight was beyond beautiful – the red clumps of trees, the golden grasslands, the purple color of the sky, the bright yellow sun disappearing behind a sea of clouds, like being in another world. The sky was still littered with stars when we finally reached the summit of Mt. Pulag. Slowly, small streaks of light began to mar the dark atmosphere, changing the color from black to purple and finally to a clear blue. It was a sight to behold – the bright sunlight illuminated the sea of clouds below us and turned the dull surroundings into a lovely green and gold. The accompanying heat brought by the sun was a welcome change. Surrounded by dwarf bamboos peacefully swinging with the wind and faced with the majestic view of the sun peaking out of the clouds, I found it pretty easy to forget about the cold and my weariness. It is times like this when you simply admire what is in front of you and feel as if you are one with nature. Despite everything, conquering the mountain reminded me that it truly is possible for us to overcome anything as long as we put our minds and hearts (and bodies) to it, and that every struggle has a beautiful reward. Climbing mountains is a sport for all ages. You must have faith, the right attitude and the right mindset. Mountain climbing is an extreme sport. For some, it could either be a leisure or a past time which would test your endurance, strength and faith. Mountaineering may have a negative side but when it's done right, it is surely a rewarding and fulfilling experience. As David McCullough Jr. said "Climb the mountain not to plant your flag, but to embrace the challenge, enjoy the air, and behold the view. Climb it so you can see the world, not so the world can see you."

