

**PREFACE**

*“For myself, as I reflect on my own life, my mother died when I was very young. My father in the flesh never applied the law on me. Therefore, I thank God for saving me under the covenantal refuge of the man of God when I was very young. If not for the upbringing that the man of God has given me, I cannot imagine what I will become. Thank God for the constant strong reproof and rebuke of the man of God to me and training me in the way I should go, lowering my pride, directing me in the way of Christ. If there is ever any strength and virtue in me, it is attributable to the spiritual and prudent upbringing of the man of God. However, I am not a good learner. There are many defects and ugliness within. It is due to my inward stubbornness and conceitedness that resist what the man of God is trying to inculcate in me. Nonetheless I thank God for all the love and oversight of the man of God to groom me in the fear of God. I am what I am today because of the man of God. In the sermon, pastor showed us that at the end, the stern application of the law is more than just for character development and inculcating good principles of work ethics. Above all, it is to drive the soul to the Lord and Saviour Yeshua Christ and it is done for the salvation of the soul. Hence even in this area, the Gospel preached by the man of God is underscored and biblically substantiated. There must be the preparatory work before one can be saved. This is amply illustrated in the book of Proverbs. I wonder if Solomon understands this principle. I wonder what upbringing he received from his father David. I wonder if he knows what the Holy Spirit was using him to write about. If Solomon does not, I thank God rather that our pastor does and he has greatly illumined us on this truth by the light of the Holy Spirit. There are many things to speak about. It is sad that the man of God has to constantly point out that the parents under his ministry are not heeding to his counsel which is the counsel from the Word of God. Many deceitful parents alloy it with the wisdom of the flesh. Like what Zechariah Tan has confessed recently that when he did that, the consequence is reflected in his children. From today’s sermon, we felt the gravity of the subject. We may either push a soul to the gates of heaven or be a stumbling block and bring cursing to the children and send them to hell. I am thankful to pastor for broadening the scope of his application to spiritual shepherds and church leaders. I must help the man of God and his ministry. But I have not applied the law as strongly and consistently as I am expected to do. There is the treachery and wickedness to flatter and win friendship and win people to myself instead of winning them to Christ Yeshua. I felt ashamed. I did not walk in the spirit of the man of God. Among the many verses that pastor has commented upon, I am struck by Proverbs 28:23 that says, ‘He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.’ This verse justifies the culture and ambience of the application of the law that pastor speaks of. Pastor teaches us clearly that there is no point in flattering one another; it is better to speak straight and reprove. At the end, the other party will be more grateful to you than if you flatter him and sweep sins under the carpet. I seek to repent as this is the way I have treated some of the brethren. Thank God for the strictness of the man of God. It is our spiritual safety. As he tells us in today’s sermon that the calling and office that God has given to him has altered his personality, from a jolly good fellow to a person characterised by holy anger. Sometimes, I cannot imagine that Moses who was the meekest man on earth became the fierce prophet, recorded in Deuteronomy, in lashing unsparingly at the sins and apostasy of God’s people. There is no man as meek as a Yeshua Christ but we see Him overthrowing the money changers’ tables. We see more of a fierce Person, because the zeal of God’s house has eaten Him up. Thank God for the Holy Spirit making pastor to be like Moses and Yeshua Christ. May God grant fruits for all his labour, not only for us but above all, for the world. Pastor was angry that we do not seem to understand that he is raised for the whole world; especially for whole of Christendom and the apostate Protestantism. In pastor’s preaching today, this sense was brought across to me; the whole task is actually a battle. It is a long war, fighting for souls especially the children, right from their young age. There is no short cut to salvation. Pastors, leaders, parents and guardians must not relent but keep applying strongly the law with the hope that at the end, God may bless it and the Holy Spirit may effect a preparatory work and save the person. May God help us to walk in the counsel of the godly. This is our strength. May God help us not to be ashamed of this principle even if it means violent objection and hostility. Even in this place, in Cameron Highlands, someone who was a ‘busy-body’ tried to lash out at a parent applying the law on a child, and threatening to report us. The intimidation will come further. The attack may come in different ways. Some tell us we are dinosaurs and outdated; worse if they accuse us of being abusive. But may God help us to hold our ground. Also in the mission fields, and in the establishment of the churches, even though many members may leave the ministry and churches, may God grant us the faithfulness and integrity to abide by the Word of God wherein our pastor has established us.”*

*Zephaniah Soh’s response to pastor’s message on ‘The Upbringing Of Children In The Fear and Admonition Of The Lord’ from the book of Proverbs, Part 2 (final), Cameron Highlands, Malaysia; 15 June AD 2014*