

Lessons from Bamboo

Bamboo is the fastest growing plant in the world. It can grow as fast as 24 inches a day and it only takes 3-4 months to grow into maturity.

Bamboo shoot and tissue are cooked as delicacy in Chinese restaurants. It can cure infection and increase potassium and protein. Bamboo leaves are used to wrap dumplings for Dragon Boat Festival.

Bamboo can be used for fences and floors. It is used for furniture, baskets, and utensils. Chinese classical books were written on bamboo stripes until paper was invented in 400 BC. Bamboo is also used to make clothes and musical instruments.

Farmers in southern China use bamboo as water pipes to irrigate their fields. Fishermen in Qui Lin use bamboo to build fishing rafts. In Hong Kong, bamboo is used for scaffolding. It is cheaper and faster. Because of its flexibility, it can stand Typhoon better than iron pipes.

Growing straight up, Bamboo is considered noble in character. Plum blossom, orchid and chrysanthemum, and bamboo are honored as the Four Noble Ones. Bamboo, pine, and plum blossom, are known as the Three Friends in Winter. People like to decorate their homes with bamboo. There is a Chinese saying: "Rather dine without meat than live in a house without bamboo."

Bamboo is hollow inside. Emptiness provides room for growth and change. Jesus Christ emptied himself from the glory of God and died for us as a criminal. By doing so, He saved the world.

We can learn many lessons from a bamboo: 1. We need to grow spiritually as fast as bamboo. 2. We need to be as useable for our Lord as bamboo. 3. We need to be as flexible as bamboo. 4. We need to be as noble in character as bamboo. 5. We need to empty ourselves and let the Spirit in, before we can learn and grow.

Let us pray: Dear Lord, may the lessons we learn from a bamboo inspire us to see your true glory. Help us to empty ourselves and make room for you. Amen.

學竹

竹是世上長得最快的植物，有些竹能在一天內長高廿四吋，一棵竹在三至四個月內便長成了。

竹筍及竹筍都是鮮美的食物，還可醫治炎症，增加蛋白質及鉀質。在端午節時大家都用竹葉包粽子。

竹可用作籬笆或地板，又可製作傢俬，竹籃，或食具。中國的古籍都是寫在竹簡上的，直至公元四百年發明造紙為止。竹還可用來製衣及製造樂器呢。

在中國南方的農夫用竹管灌溉禾田。在桂林漁夫用竹筏在河裏捕魚。在香港的建築工人用竹搭棚建屋，不單價廉物美，建拆快捷，更因竹富有彈性，在颱風打擊之下比鐵管還穩固呢。

竹身正直，不生旁枝，只管向上生長，所以文人墨客稱梅、蘭、菊、竹為四君子，又以梅、竹、松為雪中三友。一般平民百姓都喜歡在家中種竹，大家都說：「寧可食無肉，不可居無竹。」詩人蘇東坡也說：「無肉令人瘦，無竹令人俗。」

竹是中空的植物，有空間才能增長及應變。耶穌“虛己”，放棄了神的榮耀，成為奴僕，甚至死囚的樣式，就因如此，祂成了我們的救主。

我們可向竹學到很多的功課。1. 我們在靈裏要像竹一樣快高長大。2. 我們要為主作合用的器皿。3. 我們為神工作要能屈能伸。4. 我們在品格上要像竹一樣正直向上。5. 我們要倒空一切，讓聖靈充滿，才能繼續學習和增長。

請禱告：親愛的主耶穌，讓我們從竹學到的功課中看到你的榮耀。幫助我們倒空一切，願在心中有空處為你。阿們。