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Feature

Steady the Foundation, Expand the Church

Wang Ming Chang

Before the Lord Jesus ascended to Heaven, He instructed his disciples, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Paul similarly said that we owe a debt of the gospel and “... if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!” (1 Cor 9:16). Therefore, preaching the gospel and expanding the church are the most important matters at hand.

This world is fast-changing and we often feel like we fail to keep up with its pace; however, as spiritual citizens, we must remain unchanged amidst all the changes, as prophet Isaiah said, “For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: “In returning and rest you shall be saved; In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.” I have shared a few points below for mutual encouragement.

1. Exalt the mission and spirit of the church

Our church was established 98 years ago in Beiping, China, in 1917. The initial name of the church was “Correctional Church of All Nations True Jesus Church”. Later the name was

simplified into “True Jesus Church”. As implied by its name, the church aims to correct all religions in all nations, including Christianity. It is also the only true church of salvation – the revival of the apostolic church. This is the founding mission and goal. With respect to the method of evangelism, our church does not rely on foreigners or other denominational churches- we rely completely on the true God. We have always preached with such mindset. As Paul said, “For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient—in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ” (Romans 15:18, 19). The conviction to solely rely on God in preaching the gospel should be exalted.

2. Pursue the power of the Holy Spirit

The importance of the power of the Holy Spirit to all members and the church is undeniable. In the past, most denominations were not interested in the Holy Spirit and viewed it as the third person in the concept of Trinity. They viewed the baptism of the Spirit as recorded in the book of Acts as merely a historical record and not something to pursue after. They even accused without ground that the signs seen during the baptism of the Spirit as the work of the evil spirit. By jumping into conclusion, they not only rebelled against the authority of the Bible, but also blasphemed against the sanctity of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31, 32).

The power of the Holy Spirit is not only essential to every member’s salvation, victory, redemption and blessing, but also crucial to the evangelical work of the church. What the original churches displayed - the power of preaching, sanctification of virtues, amazing miracles, showers of blessings, martyrdom for the Lord, and unity of the churches - all came from the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we must emphasize pursuing after the power of the Holy Spirit and humbly praying for the fullness of the Holy Spirit and renewal of strength so we can carry on holy work together. Do not be conceited with the past and complacent with the present.

3. Confirm the authority of the Bible

Spreading the gospel and expanding the church are the missions entrusted to Christians. Furthermore, they are responsibilities that a preacher cannot absolve. In order to solve problems, one must first confirm the authority of the Bible so that the gospel may be preached accurately and completely, just as it was preached by the apostles. However, there are many denominations, each preaching a different set of teachings; some replace

commandments with their own traditions (Matthew 15:6), revise the gospel on their own accord (Luke 1:7) or forsake the holy teachings for their customs (2 Kings 18:33, 34). These result from their lack of respect for the authority of the Bible. They act in accordance with their own will and do not use God's teachings and laws as the standard (Isaiah 8:20), so that they stray from the right path in their faith and practice.

The Bible says, "[T]he word of our God stands forever" (Isaiah 40:8), "[T]he Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35), and "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it" (Deuteronomy 4:2). From these passages we see that God has long established the authority of the Bible. We must confirm and submit to this authority faithfully. We should not come up with unreasonable excuses and arguments to absolve our responsibility to submit to the Bible. At this end time, paganism and heresy are prevalent. We must set the Bible as the standard for our faith and practice. The Bible shall be our weapon of victory in the work of evangelizing and defending the Truth (Acts 17:2, 3). In addition, we should accurately explain the true teachings, so that we may become a worker without guilt and pleasing to God.

4. Exalt the virtues of the predecessors in holy work

What did the past workers of God rely on in preaching the gospel and explaining the Truth? Why did they spend so much effort to make clear the teachings of salvation? How did they persuade others, humble themselves, labor without complaint, and endure all kinds of hardship? Materialistically, they had so little to work with, but they made do. The hardship of preaching is indescribable and beyond the understanding of those who have not experienced it. Even when we try to imagine it today, we still cannot perceive it; we can only shed tears of sympathy for them.

Therefore, we must pay our greatest respect to the past workers of Christ – those who are deceased, those who are still living, and those who are still fighting in the spiritual battlefield. May God's grace be with them always! May God shelter them under His wings wherever they go.

Therefore, I appeal to you here to exalt the virtues of the past workers to help us cultivate ourselves. May God protect the true church in the work of spreading the Truth and the gospel, so we can set the standard and bring glory to God all over the world. Then we shall welcome the descending of the New Jerusalem in accordance with the prophesy of the end times (Revelation 21: 2, 9, 10).

5. Concluding Remark

Thank the Lord for choosing us to participate in His holy work. This is indeed an immense grace of the Lord. We must cherish His grace and do our best to learn and work, with thanksgiving. We must first take up the fundamental tasks, which are the two missions instructed by the Lord to his disciples: preach the gospel and pastor the Lord's flock (Matthew 28:19, 20). We should spread the Lord's salvation out from the small island of Taiwan into all the world (Acts 1:8) and then prepare to welcome the second coming of the Lord.

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Church News

Updated Reports on Holy Work in Samoa and Tonga (2015)

The churches in New Zealand were entrusted by the Eastern Missionary Department, to pastor over Tonga and Samoa. Currently, the Auckland Church acts as the main coordinator of holy work for the two regions during the year 2014 to 2015. Its tasks include serving as contact for the three churches in New Zealand as well as coordinating the pastoral work over the two regions, Tonga and Samoa. There have been 6 pastoral visits (every two months) to Tonga in 2015, and 4 pastoral visits (every three months) to Samoa. These visits focus primarily on pastoral ministry. .

There are approximately 12 members and 3 truthseekers in Tonga, all from Fuqing, China. Most of them run grocery stores and work six days a week from Monday to Saturday. Everyday, they work very late, sometimes until midnight. At noon on Saturday, those who live closer to church would close their stores for one hour to attend service or Bible study. There is a service is held on Sunday morning with either Bible study or recorded sermons. We suggest that they work on conducting Bible study services, taking turns to lead. We also encourage that everyone studies the assigned Bible chapters in advance to encourage two-way communications, discussions, and sharings. This can help raise interest in personal Bible reading and enhance the efficacy of the Bible study service. The plan is to gradually improve until they can hold independently-led Bible study services.

There are approximately 11 members and 1 truthseeker in Samoa also all, from Fuqing, China. Most of them run department stores or small supermarkets. Department stores are open on

Sunday while supermarkets are open every day of the week. When there is no visiting pastoral worker, there is no regular service. We suggest that they find opportune time to gather, to hold services. We hope that in time they can take a step even further to hold services weekly. It would be even better if the regular services extended from Saturday to Friday evenings (Sabbath). If they cannot meet on Fridays, they can hold it on Sunday evenings (because grocery stores are closed on Sunday). Having regular services can encourage the habit of attending services and worshipping God, which in turn gradually raises faith.

The members in the above two regions all came from Fuqing, China. If workers from the Fuqing region can participate in the pastoral work there, we can better understand their predicaments, and distribute spiritual food accordingly and timely. This will enhance the efficacy and efficiency of our pastoral work. It's possible that we can visit Fiji, Tonga and Samoa all in one trip. The goal for the pastoral work in the two regions should be to help them to become spiritually independent. Thus the focus of every visit should be to cultivate, train, and enhance their understanding of Biblical teachings.



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Europe Pioneering Status

1. Spain Region

We have been able to contact 90 members in Spain. Currently there are three worship locations: Madrid, Barcelona, and Albacete.

Madrid : Although this location has the most members, only 30 members attend service regularly. Due to differences in everyone's day off, not everyone can gather together for services on the same day. The location for Sabbath service has not been consistent for the past few years, and currently, Sabbath services are held tentatively at members' houses every Saturday from 3:00pm to 4:30pm.

Sabbath services and Religious Education classes are held every Saturday with the total average number of attendees anywhere between 10 to 15 members. 5 of those members are students who attend Religious Education classes. When pastors visit, the average number of members during Sabbath service increases to about 20 members

Thank God, the government has granted a permit for the church in Spain on January 2014. As a result, the local church is preparing to purchase a chapel. Please pray for this matter and ask God to provide His children a stable place to worship peacefully.



Madrid, October 27, 2014

Albacete : In Albacete, there are a total of 12 members all from the same family. They hold services at members' houses. Services, which are online sermons, are held regularly every Friday night, and every second Saturday of the month. The approximate number of attendance is 8, with one truth seeker and three Religious Education students.



Albacete, January 11, 2015

Barcelona : Barcelona has a total of 10 members. Most Sabbath services (Hymn singing and prayer) are held at the restaurant, which is owned by a brother. There are only two families who gather for services due to inconsistent working locations. May God continue to guide and keep.

2. Italy Region

There are approximately 111 members and 34 truth seekers in Italy. Most members reside in Prato, Napoli, and Empoli. The rest are in Milan, Sicily, Alghero, Padova, and Venezia.

Most of the time, services are held over the phone with 57 members and 12 truth seekers, and Spiritual Convocation and Evangelical Service are held twice a year. Deacon Bao-Qing Wang and the visitation team will visit members on a regular basis.

Goals for Future Church Development:

1. Set up a worship location at Prato.
2. Implement monthly visitations in Italy. Deacons will lead workers to visit members who reside in all the different regions of Italy.

3. Train sermon speakers to improve their quality of sermons as well as to bolster their knowledge of the Bible.
4. Purchase chapels as soon as possible, to improve cohesiveness between members. This will benefit evangelical work.

Empoli

Thank God, Empoli showed great improvements compared to the previous year. There is clear organization and the quality of worship has improved greatly at a rented location.

There is a total of 33 registered members and 15-22 active members. . Service is scheduled every Saturday from 2pm to 4pm, and members from the surrounding areas of Empoli attend service in person.

The visitation teams will visit Empoli every two months and they will be assigned a variety of things. There is the Religious Education class of 5 students that needs aid, as well as numerous visitations to members who have gone astray. The latter holy work will be led specifically by Deacon Wang, and it will be scheduled around the annual Empoli Spiritual Convocation. This matter is highly important, and it opens up the option to establish special services for these specific members.

Please pray for the work, life, and faith of members in Italy, and ask God to keep watch and guide the development of the church.



Spiritual Convocation in Naples held on December 21-26, 2014

3. Greece Region

The members' faith was greatly affected from the financial decline in Greece and the weakened Euro. Most members make their money during the summer and do not work in the winter. One of the major reasons that members cannot observe Sabbath is that working in Athens is generally required on Saturdays. Still, most members will abandon work in order to observe the Sabbath, even though it affects their financial status.

There is a total of 23 registered members and 8 truth seekers; where around 8-15 members attend Sabbath service regularly. Service time is every Saturday from 11:00am-12:00pm and 2:30pm-3:30pm with the occasional hymnal worship after service. Deacon Bao-Qing Wang from Italy and I.A. assigned workers will visit members on an annual basis.

Unfortunately, the church is currently not able to get registered. May the Lord continue to guide and keep the members' faith and life.



Athens Spiritual Convocation held October 23-27, 2014

 *Intercession*

1. Please pray for IA work assignment as below:

Date	Location	Program	Personnel
6/22-25	Taiwan GA	Preachers' seminar	HH Ko
6/29-7/27	India CB	Residential Pastoral /Pioneering work in North East India	Joshua Phoong Caleb Chang
5/28-6/29	West Malaysia	Pastoral work /Tamil speaking Spiritual Meeting/ Regional Malay speaking Spiritual Meeting	Sabah Preacher
6/2-6/29		Regional Malay speaking Spiritual Meetings	Indonesia Preacher
6/3-6/29		Regional Pastoral by IA sent minister (Central Region)	YC Wang
6/4-6/12		International Youth Fellowship	
6/5-6/21	New Zealand	Volunteering work(Christ church)	JG Tsai
6/27-7/10	Sabah	Preachers' Spiritual Nurture (conduct with West Malaysia/ Singapore)	HH Ko
6/8-6/15	FOZ	Pastoral Work/Training	Enoch Hou/ M. Kuo
6/21-6/23	UK	Evangelical Spiritual Convocation (Gifford Park)	MY Chao
6/28-7/1		Evangelical Spiritual Convocation (Elgin)	
4/9-6/7	South Africa	Pastoral ministry/Training	Luke Chan
6/23-9/1		Pastoral ministry/Lesotho Outreach/ Johannesburg Spiritual Convocation	MH Chang
6/1-6/30	East Africa	Student Convocation (Tanzania)	Volunteer / Kenya Workers

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 *You Could Help the Worldwide Evangelism Mission Simply by Contribution
a dollar a day...*



How You Can Help

You are called to take action for the sake of worldwide evangelism and the spreading of the gospel...with **a dollar a day**. If everyone could daily extend one dollar towards the International Assembly World Evangelism Fund, we could, together, accomplish the commission that our Lord Jesus Christ left behind. Your financial commitment will open up possibilities and resources that will lead us to save many souls.

Please take time to fill out the offering sheet available at your local church, to pass this message on to loved ones and family, and to pray for God's ministry. May the Lord be gracious to you!

To find out more about the dollar-a-day program and donation options, ***please contact*** ia@tjc.org or tjciatwn@ms25.hinet.net.

✧ *May our Lord remember your contribution and bless you abundantly!*

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