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Feature

The Opportunity Cost of Faith

Nai-Hsin Chen

I remember my father once telling me that there are three principles in running a business:

1. Area of expertise: engaging in work that we can handle; making the best use of our learning.
2. Ourselves: being personally involved in the work; not leaving everything in the hands of others.
3. Capital/costs: preparing sufficient capital; not relying completely on loans.

I think these three principles also apply to our spiritual life:

1. Area of expertise: finding the only church of salvation.
2. Ourselves: salvation is a matter that personally relates to each individual.
3. Capital/costs: accumulating the capital of salvation in our spiritual life.

There are also the following types of cost:

1. Fixed cost: receiving salvation and baptizing into Jesus Christ – or entering into the gate.
2. Variable cost: God gives us free will – we choose whether to take the right way to

salvation or to take the road to destruction;

3. Social cost: Christians have a social responsibility to shine light in the world and to be a salt that seasons;
4. Opportunity cost: The gains or benefits that we give up when we direct our resources (such as time, wealth, and talents) from one use to another. For example, when believers close their stores on the Sabbath in order to observe the holy day, they lose an opportunity to earn income for that day. They do so because they value the opportunity to receive eternal life more.

*“If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath,
From doing your pleasure on My holy day,
And call the Sabbath a delight,
The holy day of the LORD honorable,
And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways,
Nor finding your own pleasure,
Nor speaking your own words,
Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD;
And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth.”* (Isaiah 58:13-14)

In regard to our faith, if we apply opportunity cost into our lives, we will be more cautious to take every step in our spiritual life. “Time and chance happen to them all.” (Ecclesiastes 9:11). Mordecai said to Esther, “Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (i.e. to save her people, Esther 4:14). Today, God still preserves our lives; while we still have energy and strength, we should take hold of the opportunity to dedicate our time, talents, and wealth for all kinds of ministerial works, to strive for spiritual growth, to obtain God’s favor, and to finish our work of salvation (Philippians 2:12). It was hard for the rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, because he did not take hold of the opportunity of using the wealth bestowed by God on doing good and holy work. In addition, we must take hold of the opportunity to do good, like Abraham, who unexpectedly received angels, and the Shunammite woman, who received Elisha out of love; in return they were all blessed by God. Even though we utilize opportunity cost for evangelism, if we evangelize willingly, there will be a reward (1 Cor 9:16-17). The Bible teaches us to preach whether in season and out of season (2 Tim 4:2). The truth-seeking friends, who have not yet baptized, shall also take hold of the opportunity to believe in the Lord, since such opportunity may be fleeting, and the cost of failing to take hold of it is eternal life. Satan often looks for the opportunity to devour us and uses all kinds of methods to entice us. The cost of doing evil and departing from the truth is eternal death.

We Christians must put faith in the center of our lives and adopt the concept of opportunity cost

into our daily lives. Take hold of all opportunities for spiritual growth and for accumulating the capital of salvation. At the same time, be cautious in our steps; do not fall into sin. May the Lord bless us all.

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Church News

Update on the Ministry in Hong Kong and Macau

Hong Kong Coordination Board

It has been nearly 87 years since August 1929 when the truth spread to Hong Kong. We have established a total of eight churches, including Hong Kong Church, Western Church, Kowloon Church, Tsuen Wan Church, Cheung Muk Tau Church, Tai Po Church, Sha Tau Kok Church, and Ap Chau Church. In order to coordinate with one another, to be united in truth, and to integrate and share resources, the Hong Kong Coordination Board was formed in 2012. The Coordination Board, through redistricting, efficiently enabled the resident preachers to mutually pastor different local churches. It further encouraged the service leaders to provide cross-district assistance to any church in need. During the evangelical services and spiritual convocation in April of this year, a jointly-organized baptism was conducted for the first time. . Among the church in Tsuen Wan, Kowloon, Hong Kong, and the pioneering region of Macau, a total of 13 people were newly baptized into the Lord's name. Thank the Lord!



The joint baptism held in April: a total of 13 people were newly baptized.

Besides continuing the regular pastoral works within the districts, the Hong Kong Coordination Board also has the following pioneering and development plans provided here for sharing purposes:

The Guided Tour Center in Ap Chau

This is a plan led by the Hong Kong government for providing human and material resources to assist the Ap Chau residents to set up a guided tour center on the island and to train the Ap Chau residents to be tour guides. In this way, they may introduce the history and culture in Ap Chau, as well as details of their daily lives, to the visitors whose number reaches almost one thousand per month. This can enhance the visitors' knowledge of Ap Chau.

Our church wishes to make the best use of the guided tour center and tour guides to spread the gospel, thereby increasing the public awareness of the True Jesus Church and the word of God.



The Fishermen's school with over 60 years of history would soon become a guide tour center

It is planned that the earliest time the center will open for the visitors is in 2017. Please pray for this plan. May the Lord be pleased with it, so our work will go smoothly and yield wonderful fruits.

The pioneering region of Macau

In the blink of an eye, the pioneering work in Macau now has twenty years of history. Currently, the Hong Kong Church holds a family service in Macau twice a month on Sundays; a preacher leads the service, while the youths assist in religious education. The evening and Sabbath services are conducted by watching live church service of the Hong Kong Church.



The family service in the pioneering region of Macau

In the recent six-months, there were five truth-seekers who heard the gospel when they went back to their hometown in Fujian. After they returned to Macau, they zealously sought after the truth. In March, the Guangzhou Church sent workers to their houses to assist in removing their idols. Later, they requested for receiving baptism.. The Holy Work Group of Guangdong Church suggested that the believers in Macau should strive to hold services regularly on the Sabbath day and find ways to arrange for a specific venue for holding services, as well as set up plans for training workers and advancing the ministry. The group has also conveyed their willingness to help.

In March of this year, Preacher Chen Wan Fa went to Hong Kong for holding a seminar. The Hong Kong Church utilized this opportunity to have Preacher Chen visit the members and truth-seekers in Macau. Preacher Chen also encouraged them to hold services on the Sabbath and to strive to learn to hold services independently.

During the spiritual convocation held in Hong Kong Church in April, the five truth-seekers were baptized into Christ and became the children of the Lord. Thank the Lord!

Ministry in Vietnam

“If you have a Church here, I will attend...” is a comment which we have heard more than once over the last few years from sincere seekers of the truth. However, given the limited pool of resources, we couldn't commit to reaching out to several places of potential in the vast land of Vietnam.

Over the past year, the pool of volunteers dwindled and we had no choice but to hold back plans of establishing another evangelical point at Dalat (6-8 hours bus ride from Ho Chi Minh). Dalat is the hometown of our Sis Tran Thi Thuc Phuong (Fang Fang). Her parents have responded positively to the preaching of the True Jesus Church. Sis Fang Fang enlisted the help of one of her friends to help out with the translation work for our volunteers & preacher, as the father only understands very simple English. The Dalat harvest is already ready; it is only a matter of who is willing to go and whether Churches are willing to send more workers to work the grounds there. The numbers there may not be 3000, but it is still a soul.

Services conducted in Ho Chi Minh have been rather regular, but given the work schedule of the locals, services are still mostly conducted on Saturday night and Sunday morning & afternoon. Our services for members and friends are conducted separately on Saturday 4.00pm (English), Saturday 5.30 (Cantonese) and 7.30 (Mandarin). On Sundays, we would have bible studies & sermonette, RE (1 child) and truth-seeker class. Outreach work is mostly done on anytime the volunteers can arrange with the contact. We currently not only have Taiwanese and Malaysian members working in Ho Chi Minh, we also have a Korean sister.

Praise and Thank God, the General Assembly in West Malaysia has approved the volunteering of Pr Hosea Hoo to be based in Ho Chi Minh for more than 4 months (Mar-May, Oct-Nov). Pr Hosea Hoo attends Vietnamese classes for 4 hours each day while he is stationed there and can converse in basic Vietnamese. His presence there has helped strengthened the outreach works immensely. Pr Hosea has also brought over college students and members from West Malaysia to allow them to experience pioneering works. In addition to the posting of a semi-permanent preacher to Ho Chi Minh, the Gracious Lord has also guided the husband of Sis Fang Fang, Bro Benjamin Tan to find employment in Ho Chi Minh. From August onwards, we will have this additional workforce.

Sis Ngo Thi Hong Yen recently visited Singapore with her family and attended the Mid-Year Spiritual Convocation in Teluk Kurau Church. Praise and thank God, Sis Yen's eldest daughter,

Ms Thao received the precious Holy Spirit on Saturday morning. Ms Thao, who is currently in University, has already been attending our truth-seeker classes and have been very attentive. Since 2015 October, we have moved to a new location in District 8, with better facilities and accommodation, as the old place was up for sale. Until we are able to purchase a place of worship ourselves, we would probably have to be moving every 2-4yrs when the leasing term is up and not renewable.

We continue to call on Churches to help in pioneering areas like Vietnam, for there are indeed souls waiting for the True Jesus Church. We are working towards developing a core team with language capabilities to drive the work there.



Pr. Hoo explained the truth to the truth-seekers



The venue of church service


 **Intercession**

1. Please pray for IA work assignment as below:

Date	Location	Program	Personnel
7-4-7/14	Sabah	Theological Training Courses	Ezekiel Chang
7/9-7/18		Divine Workers' Seminar Preachers' Seminar Ordained Workers & Wivies' Spiritual Nurture	Fuming Tse
7/25 -8/22		Theological Training Courses	En Yuan Ho
7/14-8/10	Malaysia	Regional attachment by IA sent minister (Spiritual Nurture/Training)	I-Ju Fang
7/16-8/22		Preachers Spiritual Nurture	Ming Yang Chao
7/21-8/6	Indonesia	West Java Region Divine Workers Spiritual Nurture	Fuming Tse
		Basic & Advanced Bible Seminar	
		Spiritual Convocation	
7/1-7/21	New Zealand	RE Training & Lead services	En Guan Lee
7/5-7/25	Philippines	PMCC Pastoral Visiting (Manila/Cebu)	Zacchaeus Yong
7/9-7/17		Spiritual Convocation (Mansilingan / Bayong / Tabina)	Pr. Matthew/ Ezekiel/ John/ Pr. James/ John Mon/ Dn. Philip
7/16-7/28	Argentina	Student Spiritual Convocation Spiritual Convocation & Evangelical Services Sermon Leader Seminar	FF Chong CM Chu
7/29-7/31	Chile	Evangelical Service & Spiritual Convocation	FF Chong
7/9-7/17	Dominican Rep.	Church Dedication & Evangelical Service/Spiritual Convocation	Raymond Chou Francisco

7/31-8/3	UK	Evangelical Spiritual Convocation & 40th anniversary commemorative and thanksgiving service (Newcastle)	HH Ko
7/1-7/24	South Africa	Pastoral ministry/ Johannesburg Spiritual Convocation & Board member retreat / Lesotho Outreach	Steve Hwang
7/12-8/14		Pastoral ministry / Training / Johannesburg Spiritual Convocation	Luke Chan

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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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