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Feature

To “Remain in Jerusalem?”

Before Jesus’ ascension, He gave the great commission to two missions – Pastoral and Evangelical work. In our endeavor to fulfill the commission, we are always torn or hard pressed between the two, Pastoral or Evangelical work. Very often, we are placed in a very difficult but yet important position as to the decision to make or take, such as, which of the two is more important for now, how to go about it, how to strike a balance between the two, what about our long term plan and so forth.

The Direction From the Apostolic Church – To “Remain In Jerusalem or To Go Out Of Jerusalem?”

The Acts of the Apostles records the history of the Apostolic Church. It traces the establishment, development and expansion of the Apostolic Church from the downpour of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem to the propagation of the gospel in Rome “openly and unhindered.”

Why the early Apostolic Church was able to experience such a growth? The one and only definite answer that we always give is because of the work of the Holy Spirit. Yes, it was the

working of the Holy Spirit amongst and through the apostles and believers – the ‘God factor’ in the work. Apart from this ‘God factor,’ the ‘man factor’ that we should also consider; whether the apostles and the church are willing to submit to the will or the direction given by the Lord Jesus as to the evangelical mission work. The answer to the above question also lies on this next question, “to remain in Jerusalem or to go out of Jerusalem?” If the Church remained in Jerusalem, then Luke will not be able to record the history as such.

Initially, it was the resurrected Christ Jesus Himself who commanded the apostles to remain in Jerusalem and not to depart from Jerusalem with the sole purpose to wait for the promised Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4). Thus, after Jesus ascended, the apostles returned to Jerusalem, to the upper room to pray for the promised Holy Spirit (Acts 1:12-14). But after they have received the Holy Spirit, they are not to remain in Jerusalem but to go out of Jerusalem to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8). Thus, at first the work of the apostolic church was centered only in Jerusalem, but the Lord through persecutions scattered them (Acts 8:1,4; 11:19) so that the work will not only be centered in Jerusalem amongst the Jews and done mainly by the apostles but to the regions or provinces of Judea, Samaria, Galilee (Acts 9:31), Syria and Cilicia (Acts 9:30; ref. Gal 1:21; Acts 15:23,41) and to the Samaritans, Ethiopian, Romans and Greeks by the brethren, the apostles, Philip, Barnabas, Paul and etc. Later it progressed further, to the end of the earth; to the gentiles, to Rome and later to Spain (Rom 15:24,28).

Today’s Sense of “Remaining or Going Out Of Jerusalem.”

It is a fact and a reality, that each church or region has their own domestic problems, difficulties, deficiency and etc. And naturally, because of these one will feel that the church is weak and it is not the time yet to develop or expand the church and the work. We have to solve our problems first, to build the foundation, faith, knowledge and the lives of our believers. We lack human resources and would not want to overuse them and so forth. Yes on one-hand all these must be done and are valid reasons for strong emphasis, focus and concentration on pastoral work. But on the other-hand we should not allow these domestic problems, difficulties or deficiency to obstruct, hinder, frustrate and divert our attention away from the evangelical mission to save more souls, through the propagation, development or expansion of the gospel in the church and other locations and places in the region; to the extent that we are “restricted in Jerusalem” and “must remain in Jerusalem.”

Why is our church growth slow? It is because we always “remain in Jerusalem,” As long as we “remain in Jerusalem,” the church will not grow and will not be able to see the gracious, wonderful and mighty works of our Lord Jesus. But instead may continue to see the troubles, problems and difficulties set before us. Worst still, it seems that there is no ending to it.

But if we “go out of Jerusalem,” as the Lord Jesus commanded, the church will grow and will be able to see the gracious, wonderful and mighty works of our Lord Jesus and this will be a new source of strength which will uplift and stirred up the whole church. So, let us leave the upper room, for the promised Holy Spirit has come. Let us “go out of Jerusalem,” to focus and concentrate on evangelism, with oneness of mind and heart and working together hand-in-hand in a concerted effort to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19; 24:14; Mk 16:15-20; Acts 1:8).

Therefore, how long do we want “to remain in Jerusalem?”

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 *Church News*

A Cry from West Africa

Timothy Yeung

“And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us ...” (Acts 16:9).

In our ministry, only through the guidance of the Holy Spirit will we be able to advance our work. Our job is merely to submit to God’s guidance and coordinate in God’s work, as well as to actively pioneer places in order to spread the gospel. From January 3 to February 5, 2017, the International Assembly sent workers to West Africa to do pioneering and pastoral work. A brief report is provided below:

(1) Siena Leone

This small country located in West Africa was once colonized by Britain. After its independence, its politics were unstable. The people suffered through a series of civil wars. Soldiers and civilians disabled by wars can be seen throughout the streets. A few years ago, the country was struck by an Ebola epidemic, bringing greater hardship to an already impoverished nation; its economy took a huge hit and it became one of the poorest nations in the world. However, God remembers the poor.

The true teachings were spread to different countries in early 2000. However, due to wars, plagues and other factors, the pastoral work was not able to continue, leading to the

scattering and loss of members. In light of this, the African Holy Work Group planned to revive the holy work in this country and sent workers there. During the two-week trip, the workers found the lost True Jesus Church members in the small town of Bo. The workers further preached the gospel and held evangelical services in the neighborhood, re-establishing services being held in the town. In addition, they came into contact with a Christian denomination in the capital city of Freetown and used its service place as a point for our ministry, preaching the truth of salvation. During this period, six people received the Holy Spirit.

(2) Togo

Togo is a French-speaking country with simple folk customs.



RE class under the tree



Badou's members diligently learn the word of God.

Through the efforts of the Ghanaian workers, the true teachings were introduced into the country a few years ago, took root, and grew. There are three evangelical bases in the country and more than 100 believers. This time, the workers pastored over the church in the town of Badou.

In fact, the True Jesus Church workers came to pioneer this region more than a decade ago; however, because of the lack of faithful workers, the gospel work could not advance. But then God's time came. A few years ago, a pastor named Kadar from another denomination learned of the Truth. He humbled himself and accepted it, and led all the members from the church he formerly pastored over into the truth. After their baptism, the church of Badou was founded; they have been holding the Sabbath services at his house for several years. He has been faithful to God in his work, and God has worked with him. The truth slowly spread out in the town. This time, we only went there to pastor for a short period of one week, but the believers took hold of the opportunity and strived to learn the true teachings. They put down their work and studies to focus on learning the true teachings all day. They believe

with complete confidence in the ten articles of faith. When they received the literary ministry publications in French, they were overjoyed and cherished these publications as their prized possession. In such a hot environment, with the temperature reaching 40 degrees Celsius within the iron sheet houses, the believers, filled with the Holy Spirit, knelt on the stone-hard ground to pray fervently. Every time after prayer, they were soaked in sweat and the ground was full of sweat drops. Because of such earnest prayers, they have received even greater spiritual blessings from God. Although they are poor materially, they are rich in faith.



True Jesus Church members in Badou

(3) Ghana

It has been more than 30 years since the truth was preached to this country in the early 80s. Currently, there are approximately 20 places for service and 500 members, four full-time preachers, and four theological students. The country has a nation-wide coordination center called GECB (Ghana Evangelical Co-ordination Board). Other than the holy work within the country, the workers in Ghana have assisted in pioneering work in other countries including Togo, Siena Leone, and Leberla, etc. This February, Ghana church held a national church conference and selected new council members. In addition, the local churches have gradually implemented the practice of contributing 40% of the offerings to the GECB. May God guide the development of holy work in this country so that one day they will be able to be independent in establishing and pastoring churches, as well as in preaching. This March, the theological students in Ghana were sent to the neighboring country of Nigeria for training and mutual learning with the holy workers there.

(4) Concluding remark

In the poor continent of Africa, there are many souls thirsting for the truth and waiting for salvation. We ask all brethren to do their best to make offerings to the IA's special fund for African ministry. We further ask God to move more youths talented in the English and French language to devote themselves full-time or as volunteers in response to God's calling! We must hurry to spread the gospel to the ends of the world before the second coming of the Lord.

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 *Church News*

Brief Update on Singapore & Myanmar

Singapore

This year marks the 90th year since the inauguration of the True Jesus Church in Singapore. Deeply conscious and thankful that it is God's provision and guidance that saw us through the many decades, the SCB council has opted for a reflective-introspective commemoration over a celebratory approach.



Highlights of Activities (June 2016 to May 2017) are as follows:

Church Development

A significant milestone for church development was the relocation of Friday evening services of Upper Serangoon Service Point from rented premises belonging to an external organisation to our own premises in Oct 2016, and setting it up as branch of Telok Kurau Church running the full range of weekly services including RE classes in Jan 2017. Sabbath attendance averages at 110. It is now managed by a pro-tem committee, and plans are underway for it to be registered as Serangoon Church in 2018.



Believers attended service in the relocated premise in Serangoon

Marriage Week

We ran a “Marriage Week” programme for the first time, spread over 2 weeks in each church in Oct/Nov 2016. The vision of the program is “To Have a Christian Home”. To achieve this, three essential factors were identified, namely:

1. Marriage in the Lord
2. Growth in relationship between husband and wife
3. Strong family bonded in God’s love

Six sermons were delivered by different speakers in each church over two weekends to expound on these 3 factors. Each church also invited members of different backgrounds to bear testimonies on their marriage to further encourage members to marry in the Lord. A youth forum was also organised on marriage facilitation.

| Sermon | Speaker |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Biblical Concept of Marriage | Simon Chin |
| 2. Marrying in the Lord (I) – Problem of yoking with unbeliever | Ezra Yeow |
| 3. Marrying in the Lord (II) – being heirs together of the grace of life | Peter Shee |
| 4. Be concern for the marriage of our children | Elisha Shim |
| 5. Managing Marriage (I) – Balance between multiple roles | Silas Kong |
| 6. Managing Marriage (II) – Overcoming dangers | Chin Aun Quek |
| 7. Youth Forum – Marriage Facilitation | Barnabas Chong |

Evergreen Fellowship

Every Thursday from 10am to 12 noon senior members gather at Adam Road and Telok Kurau churches for Bible lessons followed by activities like hymning singing, quizzes, games & handcraft. Prayer for the Holy Spirit is included fortnightly in the programme. The 2-hour weekly programme ends with a fellowship lunch.



Handicraft class of Evergreen Fellowship

Evangelism

Besides the regular evangelistic services, we organise a monthly care programme for old folks residing in Orange Valley Nursing Home as a form of outreach. From this year, we make a second visit there each month to do one-on-one evangelism.



The care programme for old folks residing in Orange Valley Nursing Home

Missions

In the mission field, we continue to uncover problems in Myanmar, especially in the leadership. Also, in August 2016, Dn Thomas Yen and wife relocated back Taiwan. Much rectifying and restorative effort has been expanded and we foresee it will require more time before we bring the Myanmar church back on track again. Trainee Preacher Mang Za Lian started his practical year in July 2016 which will last till end June 2017, after which he will be assessed for ordination.

The current membership status of Myanmar churches are as follows:

| Churches | Members | Baptism | Deacons | Teachers |
|------------------------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Yangon | 106 | 4 | - | 5 |
| Taungzalat | 118 | 3 | 1 | 5 |
| Natkyikong | 36 | - | - | 1 |
| Sawbuayeshin | 77 | 4 | - | 4 |
| Prayer Houses | | | | |
| Letpanchaung | 41 | | - | - |
| Mamoh | 7 | | - | - |
| Aizawl (Mizoram,India) | 10 | 1 | - | - |
| Total | 395 | 12 | 1 | 15 |



Holy Worker Training in Myanmar

Apart from increased frequencies of pastoral trips and regular events like spiritual meetings and Bible camps, the following special events were held:

13-23 Oct 2016 – Religious Education Workshops, supervision & guidance of RE at local churches

23-27 Oct 2016 – Visit by Eld Joshua Phoong Eastern Hemisphere Department of World Mission

1-3 Apr 2017 – Leadership Review in Singapore with Myanmar ministers & full-time workers

14-16 Apr 2017 – Workshop on Teaching of Music to RE Children

Overseas Pastoral Support

In addition to the assigned pioneering in Myanmar, Singapore churches support the pastoral work in developing areas like Batu Pahat in West Malaysia and Batam in Indonesia, helping with conductin Sabbath services and teaching RE classes. In 2016 a total of 33 trips were made to Batu Pahat and 25 to Batam.

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 *Intercession*

1. Please pray for IA work assignment as below:

| Date | Location | Program | Personnel |
|-----------|----------|--|----------------|
| 5/30-6/12 | Japan | Pastoral Visitation & Seminar for Ordination & Holy Work | Fu-Ming Tse |
| 6/7-6/15 | | | Ming-Yang Chao |

| | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|--|--|
| 6/1-7/3 | Malaysia | Regional Pastoral | Lemuel Leong |
| 6/3-6/25 | | Spiritual Convocation & Regional Pastoral (Northern/Perak/Central/ Southern Region) | Nehemia Lie Thomas Fung |
| 6/15-6/29 | | Pastoral Visitation Commemorative Service of the Centennial of TJC | Fu-Ming Tse |
| 6/1-6/30 | Sabah | Church's Pastoral Work | Pdt Yakobus Chen |
| 6/23-6/29 | | Literary Camp: Guidance of Magazine Editing | Lin-Shu Hua Lin-Lien Chu |
| 6/2-6/19 | Singapore | Youths Theological Training Course: Practical Apologetics/ Comparative Religion/10 Basic Beliefs | Heng-Hsiung Ko |
| | | Adult Bible Study Course: How to Study the Bible Effectively | |
| | | Mid-year Evangelistic Services | |
| 6/25-7/7 | Korea | Preachers' Spiritual Nurture: Systematic Theology | Hong-Hsiung Ko |
| | | Church Board Members' Seminar | |
| June | New Zealand | Pastoral Work for English Speakers | Esther Wee |
| 6/16-6/21 | | Visiting & EHDWM Matters | EHDWM |
| 6/12 - 6/26 | India | Pioneering in North-East India | Joshua Phoong & Volunteer |
| 6/26 - 7/11 | | Residential Pastoral | Joshua Phoong |
| 6/6-6/26 | Philippines | Pastoral Visiting (Mindanao) | Zacchaeus Sabah Trainee Preacher |
| 6/24-6/25 | | Spiritual Convocation (Tabina) | Pr. James & Bro. Jarry |
| 6/2-6/8 6/9-6/15 | Tonga Samoa | Pastoral Visitation | Joshua Phoong |
| 6/1-6/7 | US | International Youth Fellowship (Irvine) | Timothy Yeung |
| 6/8-6/11 | | National Marriage Coordinators Workshop (Cerritos) | |
| 6/2-6/5 | Germany | Spiritual Convocation (Hamburg) | Joseph Shek |
| June | Ecuador | Pastoral Work | SM Chen |
| 6/9-6/26 | Dominican Rep. | Internship & Pastoral Visitation | Francisco MT Kuo |

| | | | |
|-----------|-------------------|--|----------------------|
| 6/15-7/16 | East Africa | Pastoral Ministry & Training (Malawi/Zambia) | FF Chong Tony Kuo |
| 6/21-9/6 | South Africa | Pastoral Ministry & Lesotho Outreach & Johannesburg Spiritual Convocation | Min-Hsiung Chang |
| 6/22-7/2 | Mid East-Dubai | Bible Seminar with Holy Communion & Spiritual Convocation | Steve Hwang |

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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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