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## *Feature*

# A Discussion on Spiritual Experiences and the Passing on of Faith

Ming Jen Wu

I had a chance to visit several churches across Taiwan. I noticed that some churches had fewer attendees at evening services than I remembered in the past. It seems that the faith of this generation is not at the same level as previous generations. Why were we not able to pass on our faith? The following is a discussion on the issue of the passing on of faith based on references to the book of Judges.

## 1. Able to Pass on Their Faith

The Scripture says: “So the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD which He had done for Israel” (Judg 2:7). They were able to pass on their faith because Joshua personally experienced God’s abidance. For example, when Joshua was fighting the Amalekites in Rephidim, he saw that God was with Moses and led the Israelites into victory over Amalek (Ex

17:8-14). And when the spies were sent out to the land of Canaan, ten of the spies did not have faith in God; only Joshua and Caleb had faith in God (Num 14: 6-9).

The elders who had seen all of God's great works for Israel also experienced God's abidance along with Joshua. For example, they saw that God gave the people manna and that their garments did not wear out and their feet did not swell during the 40 years of wondering in the wilderness (Deut 8:3-4). They also experienced God's abidance in the battle of Jericho, where all they needed to do was to obey God's instructions to march around the city, and the solid city wall collapsed (Josh 6:1-27).

Because Joshua and the elders of Israel all experienced God's mighty power, they were able to not only keep their own faith, but also lead the people to fervently serve God and pass on their faith.

## 2. Unable to Pass on Their Faith

The Scripture says: "When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel" (Judg 2:10). The reason why their faith was not passed on was because the new generation of Israelites did not know God. "Did not know" does not mean "have not heard of," but rather, "have not experienced" God. For one to know God, he must first have knowledge of God, then experience God in his life; he must only worship and trust in God. These Israelites had never experienced God's great power; as a result, they practiced what was evil in God's sight, bowing down to other gods (Judg 2:17) and marrying their children to Gentiles (Judg 3:6).

God is righteous. When His people sinned, His wrath burned against them and He delivered them into the hands of their enemies (Judg 2:14-15). God is also loving and kind. He said, "I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died" (Judg 2:21). The new generation of Israelites never experienced war or God. Therefore, through wars, God would teach the Israelites not to rely on bows or swords (Hos 1:7); as long as they would heed God's words, He would fight for them (Jos 23:6-10). God alone was the Savior of the Israelites.

Therefore, in order for believers to pass on our faith today, the leaders must first be an example for the flock (1 Pet 5:1-3). They should not only possess spiritual talents and experience, but also lead a spiritual life, so that they can set an example for the believers. Next, the believers must be familiar with the words of the Bible and be vigilant in prayers to ask for spiritual

power to overcome the temptations of Satan. In addition, we must also teach our children to seek personal experience of God's abidance. When they encounter difficulties, they will pray to God and personally experience God's grace. In this way, the foundation of their faith will be solid and they will not easily give in to Satan's temptation to turn away from God.

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## 🍌 Church News

# Update on the Ministry in Vietnam

Hosea

As of June 2017, there are 14 members in Vietnam: Two brothers from Taiwan who have been working in Vietnam for more than six years (their wives and children are in Taiwan); a sister and her son from Busan, Korea (her husband/his father sets up factories for business in Vietnam); a brother from Taiwan who married a local woman and had children—later the entire family of five believed in the Lord; a brother from Singapore who married a Vietnamese sister who had just received baptism—with their newly baptized child they are a family of three; a brother who led his wife to believe in the Lord last year (they are both Khmer).



*The volunteers join service with local members*

After many years, the number of Vietnamese believers has not increased much, nor has it decreased; it can be considered as static over the years. However, the attendance of the truth-seekers has been quite unstable. Some truth-seekers only attend service once, some attend several times, and some come many times. Although members frequently volunteer to assist with the ministry, they have often been assigned to pastoral work, so evangelism hasn't been as easy.

The volunteer team feels the same way and also testifies that whenever there is God's work, are always obstacles from the evil one.

Example 1: A mother of a Vietnamese sister was once moved by the Holy Spirit in prayer, and her tongue was moving on its own. It was originally a joyful thing, but later under the influence of the sister's brother-in-law (who belongs to another denomination) she stopped praying in this manner.

Example 2: This Vietnamese sister's brother had seen a vision. He was moved by the love of the Lord, repented, and was able to quit his long-time drug addiction. However, he later encountered problems at work and got busier, and gradually stopped attending church service.

Example 3: The older sister of this Vietnamese sister attended church services with her husband and often came to seek the truth. However, because her husband continued to share his personal opinions on the doctrines of the True Jesus Church, she became opposed to the one true church and praying with the Holy Spirit.

Example 4: After being moved by the love of the Lord and accepting baptism, a sister's husband came to understand the truth and left his incorrect faith. But later on because of money and family issues, as well as a loss of affection, they separated, to everyone's regret.

In all these incidents, even though the wicked one repeatedly used all means to attack us, God's love continuously strengthened us, so that we are not discouraged and can continue our work for the Lord.

In a communist country, although we appear to have religious rights, there are actually many restrictions. We cannot distribute flyers in public, nor can we build churches with our own

church name. We even need to be secretive in renting houses for church service. In addition, language is also a big obstacle. Although some of our members and truth-seekers are Chinese, none of them are fluent in Chinese. There was some contact with university students, but they could only use very basic English to communicate. Therefore, Vietnamese is still the main language for communication and evangelizing. Thanks to the Lord, some local sisters can speak and translate local dialects and Vietnamese to help with a lot of pastoral and evangelical work. We ask God to continually guide, bless, and keep the believers here. May the Lord add to us daily those who are being saved.



*Fellowship at a Korean sister's house*

Finally, we would like to ask for your intercession and assistance. If you know any Vietnamese friends, truth-seekers, or brothers and sisters who are working in Vietnam, please contact the Vietnamese Ministry Committee, so that we can continue to follow up and visit them. May all glory be given to God!

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## Update on the Ministry in Hong Kong and Macau

### Upper Primary Class Bible Camp (2017.04.13~16)

Thanks God, a 4-day Upper Primary Class Bible Camp was successfully held from April 13 to 16. The topic of this year was “Members love one another.” Most students were attending the bible camp for the second year, so they were more experienced and understood the purpose of joining the Bible camp. They were, therefore, more eager to learn the Words of God, this made them more enthusiastic in learning the Words of God. Three of students joining the Bible camp were from Macau prayer house, and some of them were the second time to attend. They learnt and listened to the Words of God together in the bible camp.



*Upper Primary Class Bible Camp*

### Hymnal Concert (2017.03.26)

Thanks God for His help and guidance, the Hong Kong Coordination Board (HKCB) successfully held a hymnal concert in the Concert Hall of The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts on March 27, 2017. The topic of the hymnal concert was “God is Love.” This was aimed to introduce to the public our merciful eternal God by sharing hymns and testimonies. In addition to the youth choir and mini choir, Sister Huang Qian-yu, who is a soprano of the PSALM & WISDOM SINGERS from Taipei, also performed in the concert. A

total of 9 hymns and 2 testimonies were given during the concert, to make people understand more about the salvation of our God. Thanks to the guidance of God, there were more than 300 audiences, including our church members and more than a hundred truth-seekers, to come for the feast of God.



#### Joint Activity between Kowloon Church and Guang Zhou Church (2016.12.24~25)

On December 24-25, 2016, Kowloon Church Junior and Intermediate Youth Class students have a chance to exchange with church members in Guang Zhou church. They were picked up by 3 brothers at the Guang Zhou train station at 9:00 a.m. and warmly welcomed by brothers and sisters in Guang Zhou Church. They were getting more familiar with each other through this gathering with the Guang Zhou Church Lamb Fellowship. There was also an outdoor activity, which is to climb the Mountain Bai Yun. They were hiking up the mountain top, and enjoying chatting to each other. When they walked down the hill, they sang praise unto God together, showing the spirit of one family in God. This gathering not only allowed the students to meet the church members in Guang Zhou, but also to gain some spiritual partners, leaving them a good memory.



### Book Fair (2016.7.20~26)

On July 20-26, 2016, the Ministry of Literary of HKCB participated as an exhibitor in the 27<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong Book Fair held by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. This is to let more of our church member to get involved in the literary work and to have chance to preach to others. It is aimed to preach to the public and encourage them to receive the gospel through the exhibition booth. The topic of this year was “From doubt to believe,” leaflets introducing TJC were published and relevant information were also posted on Facebook so that more church members could know about the situation in the book fair and the truth seekers could know more about our church. Moreover, a “Book fair visitor attendance workshop” was held on July 7 (Sunday), to let members understand the workflow of book fair and things to pay attention to in ushering. Please pray for the truth seekers who have visited our book fair booth, so that they could be moved by God to seek and search for God.

### Recent status of Macau

Some of the Macau members attended the Spring Spiritual and Evangelical Convocation in Hong Kong and one of them was baptized during the convocation. Currently, workers were sent twice per month to Macau to lead the service, of which one was held on Sabbath. Religious class was conducted during every visit. Three Macau students also attended the Upper Primary Class Bible Camp held by HKCB in April.



*Members of Macau*

 *Intercession*

1. Please pray for IA work assignment as below:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Personnel</b>
7/5-7/27	Indonesia	Advanced Bible Course (Mandung Church)	Joseph Matias
		Spiritual Convocation (Gatsu Church)	
		Bible Class (Banjarmasin Church)	
		Spiritual Convocation (Lasem Church)	
		Bible Class (Salatiga Church)	
7/7-8/4	Sabah	Divine Workers Seminar: Divine Work Development Theory and Practicum	H. C. Huang
		Preachers Seminar	
		Ordained Workers & Wivies' Spiritual Nurture	
		Divine Workers Seminar: Challenges in the End Time	
		Theological Training class: History of Doctrines/ Doctrinal Comparison	
		Divine Workers Spiritual Nurture	
7/13-8/7	Malaysia	Regional Pastoral	Elisha Shim
7/5-7/11	Australia	Youth Camp & Training/General Pastoral (Perth-Cannington)	Nahum Lim
7/12-7/18		Spiritual Convocation(Perth – Dianella)	
7/7-7/23	New Zealand	Students' Spiritual Convocation (East Auckland / Auckland)	Barnaba Chong
7/24-8/27		Pastoral work & Divine Workers' Seminar	Zhen-Sheng Luo
7/6-7/26	Philippines	PMCC Pastoral Visiting (Visayas)	Pr Zacchaeus & Sabah Trainee Preacher
7/15-7/16		Spiritual Convocation(Mansilingan & Bayong)	Pr Matthew & Ezekiel Pr James & Bro Jarry

7/22-7/23		Spiritual Convocation(Cebu)	Pr Ezekiel Pr. Zacchaeus
7/15-7/23	Argentina	Spiritual Convocation & Evangelical Services	Timothy YeungCM Chu
7/17-7/21		Student Spiritual Convocation	
7/7-7/9	Chile	Spiritual Convocation & Evangelical Service	Timothy Yeung
7/2-8/1	UK	Spiritual Convocation/Evangelical Service (Elgin/Cambridge/ Sunderland/Newcastle)	UKGA
7/28-8/2	Germany	Students Spiritual Convocation( Heidelberg)	HH Ko
7/1-7/17	South Africa	Pastoral ministry/ Lesotho Outreach	Steve Hwang
		Johannesburg Sermon Leader Seminar	
		Spiritual Convocation	
7/11-8/14		Pastoral ministry/Training/Johannesburg Spiritual Convocation	Luke Chan
7/1-7/10	Benin	Pastoral Work	H. C. Hsieh Minh Ly

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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](mailto:ia@tjc.org) or [tjciatwn@ms25.hinet.net](mailto:tjciatwn@ms25.hinet.net).

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

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