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Feature

Freely We Have Received, Freely Give

An urgent call for all His chosen ones to take up with all diligence the work of the Gospel.

Joshua Phoong

Our Lord Jesus Christ has entrusted to all of us, the chosen ones of the end times, the call to take up the divine commission and to embark with great resolve, focus and determination, the work of spreading the gospel and to preach the message of salvation and deliverance to reach out to the people of the world who are in need of the precious doctrine and the good news.

God's Kingdom is at hand

When our Lord sent out the chosen 12 apostles, on the mission to preach the gospel, our Lord Jesus in **Mt 10:7** also instilled a great sense of urgency and commitment into the work of saving souls as He commanded the Apostles to tell the people that “the kingdom of heaven is at hand”. This call to the people urging them to believe in the gospel as the kingdom of God is at hand was also personally delivered by our Lord Jesus when He commenced His Ministry on earth, as seen in **Mk 1:14-15** where our Lord Jesus, not only preached of the gospel pertaining

to the Kingdom of God, but He urged the people to whom He reached out to that they must act fast to receive and accept the gospel, as the kingdom of God is at hand.

The message from our Lord Jesus resonates strongly to all us at the end times as it gives a stark reminder for us that we cannot afford to delay and to procrastinate in the work of the gospel as the time is drawing near where the hearts of man will grow weary and tired, and they will no longer be prepared to listen to sound doctrine and we will not be able to advance the work of the gospel. In this day and age, even though the time remaining for the doors of salvation to remain open is so short, unfortunately many of us are just too contented with what we have and what we have received, keeping the precious gospel “locked up” only to ourselves and to our loved ones, without the urgency, commitment or the desire to reach out to others and to save souls. This is not what our Lord Jesus requires of us all.

Freely we have received, freely give

As our Lord Jesus commissioned His chosen 12 apostles and sent them out to do the work of the gospel with urgency and commitment, our Lord also passed on an important teaching to His apostles in **Mt 10:8**, and revealed to them true significance of their mission in that “Freely you have received, freely give. Truly the most precious and valuable thing which we have today, far exceeding all the treasures and glories of this world and life is that we have received the gospel of salvation, which allows us to enter into the kingdom of God and receive salvation and eternal life, was indeed freely given and imparted to us.

This precious gospel was not exchanged for a King’s ransom nor was it imparted for any gain or advantage, but these words of life were given so freely, so that we may also partake of it, and share this freely with others. It serves to bring us back to the true purpose of our faith, which is to freely share the gospel of salvation to others, and that what we ourselves have received from others, that we must also take up this commission to share the goods to all others in need and in search of the gospel, which we have received so freely ourselves, so that others may also be saved and receive eternal life through the gospel and for others to also receive our Lord Jesus. As it is written in **Mk 16:15**, we are to go into all the world and to preach this gospel to all man.

In knowing that it is our true purpose to share to others, the gospel that we have so freely received, let us also be sincere and acknowledge that we have received this special grace from God, the gospel of salvation, not because we deserve it, or that we have earned it through our good deeds or actions or that we are better than others. Far from that, we who are sinners, are not worthy of this special grace through our own actions or deeds neither have we labored or

worked this grace. In **Eph 2:8-9**, Apostle Paul puts it into context that gospel of salvation is the gift from God, not because we have earned it, and so we are not to boast of the divine work which we partake in.

Having the power and authority of our Lord Jesus and with the gift to accomplish the work of the gospel

When our Lord Jesus entrusted the apostles with the commission to preach the gospel, He equipped them with the power and authority to accomplish this great task without having to be fearful or be timid that the work of the gospel will not be able to be accomplished. Often times, even when we are stirred up to take up the mantle of the gospel and to be an evangelist to spread the good news, we are hampered by our own fears, and lack of faith that we will not succeed. We do not have the heart of courage to walk steadfastly in the gospel work, citing our own lack of ability or gift to take up this commission.

Why should we be fearful when it is the will of the Lord Jesus to empower us and equip us to take up this Holy work? Brethren, be of good courage as our Lord Jesus has overcome the world and all the obstacles, troubles and hindrances that the world brings. In **Mt 10:1**, let us all take heart that the Lord Jesus has given His apostles the power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, to heal all sickness and afflictions. The same power and authority in which the Lord Jesus has empowered the apostles is likewise given to all of us today who are willing and able to take up the commission, and accomplish the work of the gospel according to his will.

When our Lord Jesus was ministering on earth, in **Lk 4:18**, He was sent to preach the gospel to the poor, to comfort those who are brokenhearted, and preach deliverance, to heal people of their sickness and affliction and to set at liberty those who are oppressed. In short, the Lord was sent to be the Messiah and the Saviour of mankind, to free mankind from the bondage and oppression of sin, which separates us from the love of God. This ministry, was not just one which is undertaken by Jesus Himself, but the Lord has tasked His apostles to do likewise as He sent out the apostles to do the same as He has done.

As our Lord Jesus had in the past commissioned the apostles to undertake this gospel work, it is His will that all of us today, His chosen ones are likewise commissioned to take up the work of the gospel, as our Lord Jesus has equipped us with the power and authority of the Lord to accomplish the gospel work with urgency and commitment.

Mt 10:8 is a reaffirmation from our Lord Jesus that as He wanted the apostles to do as He has done, bestowing on them power and authority to do all great deeds and tasks to accomplish the

work of the gospel, our Lord Jesus will likewise bestow on all of us today who have answered the call to take up the work of the gospel the same power and authority to accomplish this divine work. Further, in **Eph 4:7, 11-12, 16**, our Lord Jesus has given each one of us grace according to our needs, equipping each us with such measure of spiritual gifts as required to accomplish the work of the ministry, with each individual taking up the respective tasks and duties for which we have gifted to undertake, for the edification of the body as a whole.

As each one of us takes up this great commission of the work of the ministry in faith and entrustment, knowing that it is the will of our Lord Jesus that this task is to be performed by us, let us also draw strength and comfort from what our Lord Jesus has said in **Mk 16: 15-20**, to know that these signs will follow those who believe, and that we will be able to accomplish great tasks in His Holy Name, and so that others can bear witness that our Lord Jesus is working with us, and that we will be able to confirm the His word, in these the last days, through the accompanying signs.

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Church News

Update on Moscow Church's Holy Work

Russia Ministry Team

The Moscow church has a practice of having a special service every new year. The New Year's Evangelical Service took place January 1-2 and Student Spiritual Convocation January 4-5. One month prior, the church mobilized all members to fast and pray twice a week during breakfast.



Hymn presentation and group photos during the evangelical service in Moscow Church

The preacher who was assigned to assist with Moscow's holy work developed a cold and severe cough. He was the only worker assigned and a replacement couldn't be found on such short notice, so he relied on his faith and came to Moscow. Thank God, the temperature in Moscow remained above zero degrees Celsius for several days around New Year's, which was a rare occurrence in the past 100 years. In addition, because Moscow church had replaced the chapel's heating system and carpets before winter, the indoor temperature was much higher than in previous years. Through the loving intercession of co-workers and brethren, the preacher rarely coughed and remained healthy without affecting the holy work.

Thank God! There were 29 believers and 28 truth seekers (10 of whom attended service for the first time) who attended the evangelical service. Two primary school age truth seekers also participated in Student Spiritual Convocation after the evangelical service. Everyone rejoiced happily for an "especially warm" New Year.



Class and group photos during Student Spiritual Convocation in Moscow Church

During the 10 days the preacher was in Moscow, he shared his experiences in evangelism in his local area and encouraged the council members and all believers to preach actively.

Immediately after the spiritual convocation, the Moscow church set up a WeChat group and held an extended council meeting to discuss how to carry out evangelism. After the discussion, the council members decided to set up three gospel teams, hold regular family evangelical services, and show concern for and follow up with truth seekers in teams.

In addition, the council members also resolved to set up an online truthseeker class and encourage all truthseekers to participate and learn. Each gospel team is responsible for individual supervision and assistance. All members pray for them every day. The textbook is *The Pursuit of Faith* published by our church for truthseekers, which consists of 6 modules and

25 lessons. Starting from January 28, three members are responsible for uploading the lesson, quizzes, and devotionals in the WeChat group. There are two lessons per week and all lessons will be completed in late April. The truth seekers who complete the study will be encouraged to be baptized during the evangelical service and spiritual convocation in early May.

We pray that the Lord Jesus guides us. May all brethren in the world intercede for us!
Hallelujah, Amen!

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Church News

Vision for Elder Care

Public Charity Council of Taiwan GA

Taiwan GA, in accordance with the tax code, set up a Public Charity Council to manage the different groups that receive revenue from goods and services. At present, Rehoboth Welfare Foundation, Palm Tree Literacy Foundation, bookstore, nursing homes, kindergartens, Sacred Orchestra, and Dorcas Love Mission are all under its care.

There are 260 locations for Sabbath services in Taiwan with more than 55,600 members. Currently, only two nursing homes (Puli & Dalin) can accept more residents and they may not be able to cope with the growing elderly population in all the churches in Taiwan.



Members and Care Team of Public Charity Council in Dalin Nursing Home

In the future, the low birthrate and aging population will become serious problems for Taiwan. Due to good health and longevity, the percentage of elderly members exceeds that of the elderly

population in Taiwan (14% of the elderly population), and is even higher than the ultra-aged society (20% of the elderly population). Therefore, the church must urgently prepare to care for elderly members.

The results of a survey conducted recently by the Public Charity Council showed that when our members think about life after retirement, they would like to stay in institutions where "there is a chapel for church service."



Staff's hymn singing and group photo in Senior Appreciation Service at Puli Nursing Home

However, before the local churches start to set up elderly care centers or retirement homes, we should first manage the Puli and Dalin's retirement homes well; both locations can currently accommodate more elders from any of our churches in Taiwan (they are not limited to members in the central or south-central regions in Taiwan). Then with adequate resources (in terms of manpower, materials, and financial strength), we will have the capacity to branch out throughout Taiwan or set up retirement homes to implement the plan of "aging in the local church."

Therefore, we have set up short-term, medium-term, and long-term initiatives for elderly care.

Short-Term: First, with existing land (to reduce the cost of purchase), we can carry out two types of care— nursing and convalescent care, as well as continuing the long-term care training program. Meanwhile, we can request the local churches to promote the Evergreen Fellowship and education classes for the elderly.

Medium-Term: For local churches to plan and implement. Set up local senior day care, home care, and small-scale multifunctional services (which require logistics support from the relevant organization).

Long-Term: Set up according to local conditions and local institutions. Along with already-established locations at other local churches, we can establish a “Senior Care Development Center” which will carry out elder care and has a support network.

Please pray for this ministry and invite all churches to implement the Evergreen or Elderly Fellowship first. The gathering of the Elderly Fellowship (including senior age learning, light exercise, etc) will be more practical than government senior care institutions. It will enhance spiritual joy, revitalize the muscles of the elderly, improve physical strength, stimulate mental capacity, and delay aging.

Since 2018, the Public Charity Council of Taiwan GA has decided that Puli Private Christian Homes of Love will employ retired preachers to assist in pastoral work. Currently, Eld. Joshua Lo and Eld. Sheng Chuan Chen take turns in caring for the elderly members , and deliver the message of the Gospel to the non-believing tenants and staff. They have been warmly welcomed. Thank God!

Nan-Men Church was the first to begin elder care services, then Lunwei Church and now to the current planning and operation of the nursing institutions in Puli and Dalin, the work of elder care started by our predecessors should not only be passed on, but also carried forward and spread. The main purpose of this work is to fulfill the love of our Lord Jesus.

We hope that the nursing works in Puli and Dalin pioneer elder care in the True Jesus Church. And through improving the quality of service, our “Elderly Care Development Center” can be developed and faithfully implemented in all the churches. So all the local organizations that care for our church’s elderly members, or the senior day care centers, nursing homes, and home care centers can become the happiest experience for every elderly member, as well as serving as a platform for preaching the gospel to the elderly.

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Intercession

1. Please pray for IA work assignment as below:

| Date | Location | Program | Personnel |
|-------------|-----------------|---|------------------|
| 3/2-3/4 | Sabah | Literary Camp-Rightly Dividing the Word of truth (Sibuga) | KC Tsai |

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|-------------|-------------|---|---|
| 3/2-3/27 | Indonesia | Theological Seminary (Book of John) | James Yapp |
| | | West & East Jawa Spiritual Convocation | |
| 3/18 – 3/30 | Korea | National Preachers Spiritual Nurture | Hong-Hsiung Ko |
| 3/30-4/22 | Hong Kong | 3/30-4/2: Workshop on Evangelical Video/Audio Production Spiritual Convocation— 4/6-8: Western District 4/11-15: HK Island 4/19-22: Kowloon | Ching-Rong Chen/ Jheng-Wei Huang/ Han-En Gao |
| 3/1-3/31 | Japan | Pastoral Visitation | ZE Shaw |
| 3/15-5/29 | | Pastoral Visitation (Kansai) | Tong-Wen Huang |
| 3/12-4/8 | Australia | Pastoral Visit 3/12-3/25: Perth-Dianella, Cannington 3/26-4/8: Melbourne | Cheng Kuang Tsai |
| 3/25-4/15 | | 3/25-4/2: Marriage Week/National Marriage Coordinators Seminar (Brisbane) 4/3-4/15: Family Week/Kingdom Expansion (Sydney) | Cheng Sheng Lo |
| 3/29 -4/8 | New Zealand | Bible Seminar/Evangelistic and Spiritual Convocation | Simon Chin |
| 3/24-4/2 | Myanmar | Youth Theological (Yangon) | Barnabas Chong/ Filipus Antonius / Filipus Antonius |
| 3/5-3/28 | Philippines | Chinese Community Outreach Evangelize to Chinese (Manila) | Caleb Chen |
| 3/26-5/6 | US | Evangelical Service & Spiritual Convocation 3/28-4/1: Pacifica 4/2-4/8: San Jose (4/2-4/4 Bible Seminar) | ZY Chen |

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|-------------|-------------|--|---------------------|
| | | 4/11-4/15: Baldwin Park 4/18-4/22: Irvine 4/25-4/29: Queens 5/2-5/6: Elizabeth | |
| 3/15-4/11 | | TTP Course—Pauline Letters: Gal, Eph, Phil, Col, Phm/Jesus' Life (Cerritos) | Chih Chieh Huang |
| 3/2-3/5 | Canada | National Ministers and Church Council Workshop/National Church Conference (Toronto) | Steve Hwang |
| 3/23-3/25 | | Sacred Music Seminar (Vancouver) | Tina Yang |
| 3/2-3/4 | Austria | Spiritual Convocation & Evangelical Service (Salzburg) | Johnny Liu |
| 3/2-3/4 | Germany | Training & Special Service(Hamburg) | Michael Chan |
| 3/21-4/9 | | 3/21-3/26: Special Service (East Paris) 3/28-3/30: Students (over 18 Y) Training (Heidelberg) 3/30-4/1: Spring Spiritual Convocation (Heidelberg) 4/2-4/3: Church board training (Heidelberg) 4/5-4/9: Spiritual Convocation (Rheinland) | FM Tse |
| March | Italy | Spiritual Convocation (Empoli) | CJ Hsieh BQ Wang |
| March/April | Spain | Visit & Concern (Madrid/Albacete/Barcelona) | BQ Wang |
| March | FOX | Pastoral Work | Ming Tao Kuo |
| 3/11-4/8 | West Africa | Workers Training(Ghana) | Johnny Liu |

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|-----------|------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 3/16~3/25 | Mauritania | Pastoral Visit/Care | FF Chong/ Stephen Shek |
|-----------|------------|---------------------|---------------------------|

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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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