

# MANNA

True Jesus Church ISSUE 46 OCT-DEC 2004 **Spreading The Gospel**

The Widow's Oil  
**Pray to the Lord of Harvest**

Report On The Pioneering Work  
**In Nord-Kivu, Republic of Congo**

# MANNA

Oct-Dec 2004

ISSUE 46 Vol 29 No. 4

## Spreading The Gospel

“The goal of Manna is to inspire believers to live an active faith through mutual

**EDITOR IN CHIEF** *encouragement and the study of biblical truths.*”

San-pao Li

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Dear Reader,

In September of this year, we were blessed to hold the Writer's Retreat in Cambridge, UK. We sincerely thank the UKGA for hosting this event, and we also thank all the participants who came with their pens and papers, some with nifty laptops and gadgets, to write for the Lord.

Though small was our group, I believe everyone who attended took away precious lessons about serving God through Literary Ministry. We spent the week in the beautiful Cambridge House of Prayer, we had daily fellowship through Bible sharing and prayer, and we helped one another develop our articles.

Most of all, each of us realized that sharing the gospel through writing is an important task. The more we study the truth and pray for the Spirit's inspiration, the closer we are to God and the more effective our writing will be.

On a personal note, I am thankful to God for all the lessons He taught me through the participants, and I am humbled to be reminded that it is God who puts His truth in our hearts, and it is He that gives life to our writing.

THE EDITOR

# Spreading The Gospel



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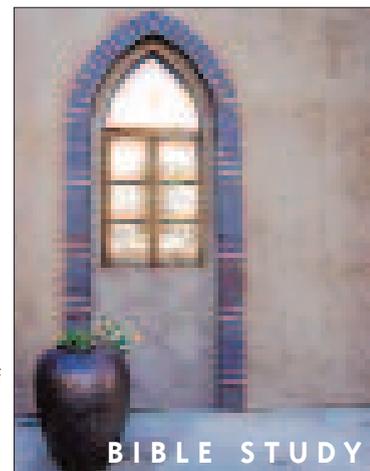
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# A Summer Of Lessons

Enoch Chang—Texas, Houston, USA

## THE DECISION TO GO HOME

In May 2005 I will complete my undergraduate education, and like many other people in the same situation I feel confused and pressured to try and understand what comes next in my life. However it's because of this circumstance that my past summer was so wonderful. Although God did not exactly reveal to me what I should do, He gave me something better: *peace*.

Before the summer of 2004 started I anxiously tried to find a summer internship. Because I wasted the previous summers, I felt guilty having my parents work so hard to pay for my education while I slept until one or two in the afternoon, using the excuse that I

deserved the time off after such a “grueling” semester.

But God obviously had a different plan for me. For some reason, even though I was well qualified for many of the positions I applied for, I didn't even get a response or an interview. Yet people I knew who applied for the same position with lesser credentials were getting the interviews and the jobs. This went on until early June, after school had let out for almost a month.

By then I was desperate and pressed to make a decision to either go back to my home state or wait around in New Jersey (NJ) to see if I could find some kind of work. I prayed about it and in the end,

I decided to go home and see my family, and to spend time with my brother before he went off to join the army. At least I tried to find a job, unlike before, so I didn't feel as guilty sleeping in.

Interestingly, after I bought my ticket to go home, I got an email from a prestigious research group on campus indicating that I had been accepted into their summer research program. But it was too late by then, I was going home and so I declined the offer. Thank God they emailed me after I already bought my ticket; otherwise, I would have taken the position immediately, which would prevent the later events of the summer from occurring.

### Bonding with My Brothers

Once I was back home, my plans for the summer, in chronological order, was to: spend time with family, clean and remodel the house, study for the GRE, go to the National Youth Theological Seminar (NYTS), return to NJ, serve as a counselor for the Student Spiritual Convocation (SSC), and get ready for school.

Before my oldest brother left for the army, my two brothers and I spent a lot of time together. There was so much to do before my brother had to leave for basic training. Of all the things that we did, however, the event that really opened my eyes was when my brothers and I shaved our heads together.

While we shaved each other's hair, we couldn't help but laugh. We took before- and-after pictures of the whole process and really bonded. But the real kicker was when we looked in the mirror together and made faces. For the first time ever, we laughed so hard together that we cried. And although these were tears that came from laughter, on the inside I was now crying out of sorrow.

I felt sad because it was through the irony that I realized how much I would miss my brother and how alone he would be. It's like what is recorded in James 4:9: "Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom." This was the beginning of what God planned for me to learn—that

the most important thing is to have God with me wherever I go.

After my brother left, I worked on the house for the rest of the summer until NYTS began.

### NATIONAL YOUTH THEOLOGICAL SEMINAR

The 2004 NYTS would be the year I graduate from the seminar. Thank God that in those two weeks of training I learned a lot, and I really felt the power of God. So many times, while I listened to the classes, it was as if God spoke directly to me. As soon as I had a question in my mind about my own life, the speaker would immediately answer it. Immediately.

When we studied the book of Judges, I could see the cycle of sin in my own life, just as the Israelites cycled through moral decline and deliverance. Yet even though they sinned, God was merciful and loving—always waiting for the Israelites to return to Him.

### The Power of Fasting

Fasting for three days is not something you do for fun. It requires more than just physical dexterity. You need to have a reason and a motivation; otherwise, you torture yourself for no reason. Before my three-day fast, I fasted for a day and a half to ask God for the strength to fast for three days.

My main reason for fasting was because I didn't know what to do about my future. The other reason was because of the prophecy in the book of Revelation that one third of the believers will fall in the end time. I have two other brothers, and I do not want one of us falling.

On the first day of my fast everything went very well. I didn't feel hungry or

thirsty at all. Even when I saw my group members eating refreshments I didn't feel bothered or tempted. But the second day was completely different. I started to feel very weak and tired and my throat was dry. Add onto that the fact that I had to translate and things became very painful.

Towards dinner time I felt like I was burning up on the inside, and I was dehydrated. Because I was so hot I even went to take a cold shower during dinner time to cool off. Thank God, there were a few brothers who knew what I was going through and they prayed for me and encouraged me. I am really thankful for their love.

That night I slept very well and on the third day of my fast I felt refreshed. But more importantly, I felt peace and I learned to completely lose my own will. I felt like I didn't need to continue any more because God had already answered my prayer by giving me peace. Even though He didn't say go to graduate school or go get a job, I felt peace and I felt God with me. But I continued my fast to show my faithfulness to God—that just because I received from God doesn't mean I will depart and go my way like nine of the ten leprous men Jesus healed.

That night I talked to a brother who was also fasting three days. Coincidentally, he was fasting at the same time that I was, and I mentioned to him that the next morning, when our fast officially ended, we would have breakfast with Jesus. The next morning when the first bell rang during the morning fast, indicating it was time to eat breakfast for those who needed to, I got up and went to the dining area. I waited outside for the other brother and, when our eyes met, we laughed and smiled.

During those three days I completely



**But more importantly, I felt peace and I learned to completely lose my own will.**

lost all my physical desires because spiritually I was so satisfied. It was like a fountain inside of me was gushing mightily with water and overflowing. But at the same time, I was able to recognize how weak and powerless I am as a human, and I really understood the meaning to the verse, “the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.” There was no way I could accomplish what I wanted to accomplish if God was not with me. However, for those three days, every time I knelt down to pray I was immediately in a higher level of prayer. It was amazing.

It was through the fast that I understood what the preacher meant when he said there are two levels of prayer: to seek after God’s power and blessings, and to seek after God Himself. Thinking back to it now, I understand why, with His last ounce of breath, Jesus had to fulfill all righteousness and said, “I thirst.” Even when He was so physically, spiritually, and emotionally pained, He had to fulfill the work of God.

I also understand why Jeremiah was the weeping prophet. He faithfully served God even though he was mocked

One of the great things about NYTS is the fact that there are over 150 students praying, singing, and learning with you. They come from all over the world and can share with you lots of different experiences and it’s easy to be edified by their testimonies. But one of the greatest things is the fact that people pray for each other. There’s no question in my mind that the summers I spent attending the various seminars the church holds have been the most meaningful.

One summer, I decided to take summer classes instead of allocating the time to attend NYTS, and I can say at the end of the summer I regretted it. I justified my action by thinking that if I had a lighter load during the school year I could focus more on daily spiritual cultivation, which is perhaps even more important than a two week event.

But that year turned out to be especially poor for me spiritually because, on the one hand, I felt I had missed out when everyone else came back from NYTS and had all these experiences to share, and I didn’t feel like I was one of them. And two because I had to learn the

has extra grace on you like He has had on many before, you can have both.

I can say without a doubt that my experiences and reflections this NYTS are more than they have been in the past because I really felt God. I felt Him forgive me of my sins, I felt His power, I felt the suffering, and I felt His great love. And I am ashamed. But God still had more for me to learn.

### STUDENT SPIRITUAL CONVOCATION

After NYTS ended my brother and I flew to NJ, and by the grace of God we both served as counselors during the Student Spiritual Convocation in August. It was in this SSC that I saw the big picture—the great plan that God had for me during this past summer.

Coming off NYTS where there were over 150 people praying and singing together, I was used to having things loud. I was used to feeling God’s power in prayer and I was used to the boot camp. But at SSC there were only a little over 50 students and from the first prayer everything was very quiet.

Their voices were so soft and in my prayer I couldn’t feel God like I did at NYTS. I started to repent and I thought maybe as counselors we didn’t pray enough in preparation. I was afraid the students wouldn’t get much out of the SSC and it was our fault. Because I was so disturbed by this I wrote in my booklet during class instead of paying attention:

*God, what is wrong? I don’t understand, why are we so weak? God help us, we need you.*

Everything made sense a few days later. During the testimony, session I was



**I felt His power, I felt the suffering, and I felt His great love. And I am ashamed. But God still had more for me to learn.**

and even though no one listened to him. Yet he maintained his faithfulness to God. And I understand fully that, to serve God, we must suffer loss but we cannot stop; just as Ezekiel continued on with the work of God after God had taken his wife the day before (Ezek 24:16-18).

teachings that I could have learned in those two weeks the hard way. It’s hard to tell your family you can’t get a good internship because you want to attend a church event, and it’s hard to watch all your friends get great internships while you don’t. But it’s worth it, and if God

touched by a sister's witness and then God opened my eyes. I was so moved that for the first time in my life I wrote an entry in my non-existent diary.

*Alas, I am a fool. Forgive me God. You were here all along but I could not see you. I could not see your works because I could not hear your still quiet voice. It was not until you spoke through an 11 year old child that I realized your presence. I'm so used to seeing your power with my eyes and hearing it with my ears, but I never considered that you were not in them. But now I've heard it with my heart, your whispering voice. I've met God and surely I did not know it. Faith that can move mountains. Faith so simple and pure, yet so profound. Forgive me Lord, I am a sinner. Cleanse me and purge me of my iniquities. Your holiness is too awesome. Amen.*



**I learned that no matter where I go, the most important thing is to have God Himself with me and to listen for His still quiet voice.**

God had been working the whole time! I just couldn't see His works because I didn't listen for the still quiet voice. I looked for God's power, but not for God Himself. It was after this realization that I saw how God had touched so many students during that SSC. Some said it was their best ever because they really touched God and could talk to Him.

I learned that the quietness that was characteristic of this SSC was actually

God's peace. Students even commented how peaceful this SSC was in comparison to the ones in the past. You never saw the students running around chasing each other. They prayed, they read the bible, they ate, and they slept.

I finally realized what God planned for me to learn this summer. It was a long process but it was definitely worth it. I learned that no matter where I go, the most important thing is to have God Himself with me and to listen for His still quiet voice. That's all that matters. Because the more I think about it, the more I realize that the process I went through is the same process Elijah went through.

From his victory on Mount Carmel against the prophets of Baal, to his fleeing to the wilderness, to thinking he was alone, to seeing God's power on the mountain of Horeb, to finally meeting God when he heard the still quiet voice, to realizing he wasn't alone, and to continuing with the work God wanted him to do. This is exactly what happened to me.

I saw God's power at NYTS and His victory over Satan. I used to think I was alone. But at NYTS I saw God has reserved for Himself many workers more faithful and zealous than myself. With my own eyes I saw God greatly revive the faith of many of His children. At SSC God took me one step further; to not seek just for His power and blessings but to seek for God Himself, to listen to His still quiet voice and take Him with me wherever I go.

As my undergraduate education winds down, I can really see that all the

decisions I've made really reflect where I want my life to head.

There's actually one last thing I learned in NYTS about the two Enoch's mentioned in the book of Genesis. The one from the line of Cain had a city named after him, and he represented fame and fortune. The other was from the line of Seth; he walked with God. So I face a choice, what do I do after graduation? Now that I am at the crossroads of my life I have peace knowing that I choose to walk with God. ★

*In quietness and confidence shall be [my] strength. (Isa 30:15)*



# My Heavenly Father Found Me

Alice Jung—El Monte, California, USA

## WELCOMED HOME

I will never forget the day the Holy Spirit came into my life. It was the summer of 1986, and the end of my second year in college. I never thought I would go to New York City by myself, much less to a church. Yet, there I was, in the True Jesus Church at Queens, New York.

At that time, I lived in a small college town in central Texas. My family had been atheists, except for my mom, who had just begun a new interest in the True Jesus Church. With my mom's encouragement, I had merely two encounters with the church prior to my trip to Queens.

I was not comfortable with the way people prayed at the church. Yet, these first contacts with the church led me to wonder about this God that they

preached. I was impressed by how they always used the Bible as their reference to answer all my questions. I also had felt warmth during one of my prayers.

However, it took a miracle for me to actually want to go to New York to attend a special spiritual event there. Going to attend a spiritual convocation, where the entire day is packed with prayer sessions and sermons, can be very boring and intimidating to someone without any religious background, like me.

Therefore, I had originally planned to stay at the church for only a couple of days so that those youths that I had met in Texas could take me out around N.Y. Then, I'll be on my way to visit a friend in Boston.

We can make our own plans but God

may have something very different in store for us. As soon as I arrived in N.Y., I remember how the brothers and sisters in Queens welcomed me and made feel so much at home. In fact, I felt like I had come home even though I knew only a couple of people there. I sensed a strong attraction from the words I heard during the sermons, and from the love the brothers and sisters showed me.

An amazing thing happened. During the afternoon prayer of the second day, I was praying to God to help a sister who was having a severe headache. Shortly after I knelt down, I felt my whole body become very warm again. The heat began to travel down from my head to the rest of my body. Following, I felt my knees bump up and down against the

wooden floor, as if a force had repetitively lifted my body above the floor a half inch and quickly lowering me down again.

My immediate thought was, “Oh, no, there must be an earthquake.” But I remembered that there are no earthquakes in the East Coast. Therefore, I concluded that it must be because I was too tired from kneeling so long for the last day or so. I quickly shifted my position in an attempt to stop the bumping but to no avail.

Next, I saw with my eyes closed, a great bright light cylindrically shone upon me from straight above. I believed that that light connected me directly with God. At the same time I saw what must have been the glory of God, and my hands began to shake up and down. My tongue moved in a different way than the “hallelujahs” I was trying to repeat—producing a sound totally foreign to me.

After I was enveloped in this wonderful light for perhaps ten minutes or so, I felt that my right hand was holding someone else’s hand. In fact, it was a man’s hand; large and coarse to the touch. I was totally shocked. I had to open my eyes to look, despite the preacher’s encouragement of not “peeking” during the prayers. I wanted to know whose hand I was holding.

Then, seeing that it was still my very own left hand, something let me know that it was Jesus holding my hand. All of a sudden, tears poured down from my eyes. I did not understand why I was crying, but I remember the immense joy and peace that flooded my heart at that very moment. Words cannot describe the amazing feeling that went through me all at the same time.

Finally, my Father had found me! I felt as if I was a little girl who was so lost

for so long that she even forgot that she was lost. Then, the loving Father had finally took my hand and led me home. The love of Jesus totally overwhelmed me, filling the “hole” that was in my heart; holes that I did not know was there. I had never felt such a sense of satisfaction in my life before. I knew that from then on, I’d never let go of His hand.

After I got up from that prayer, I learned that I had already received the Holy Spirit. All the brothers and sisters that had prayed for me were very happy for me, and they encouraged me to receive baptism at the end of the spiritual convocation.

This meant that I’d have to stay longer than what I had originally planned, and I’d have to inform my friend in Boston of the change. I was sure that she would be very disappointed.

At first I did not want to make any kind of commitment as serious as baptism. Although I did not know much about the Bible at the time, at least I could tell that being baptized meant that I’d be committed for life. As I kept procrastinating on making a final decision, many of the youths prayed for me. And finally, the night before the baptism, God let me know through a miraculous way that I should receive baptism.



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## EMPTINESS FULFILLED

After I went back home, I did not know how to live as a Christian going forward. No one at the church knew what kind of a person I was before, although they might have gotten a hint from my appearance.

What did I look like? I prided myself on being “unique.” I had my hair cut extremely short on one side so that my big earring would be prominently displayed, while I left the other side of my hair long, draping in front of my face, nearly covering one of my eye. I loved wearing different kinds of hats. And on cold days, I’d wear a black trench coat.

In one of the pictures I took in Queens, I had a red hat, red boots, and a big paperboy bag. I enjoyed getting other people’s attention by dressing up very differently than others. Although I did not understand at that time, I realized later that all my “strange” appearances were only displays of a very empty heart.

In the past, I resorted to music and dancing to fill the emptiness. I lived on music videos and I blasted music from the stereo. Whenever I can, I would go to dance parties or out clubbing. I was so well known among the people I used to hang out with, they even elected me to be the president of an Asian-American social club on campus.

But the strange thing was, the more I surrounded myself with people who enjoyed loud music and dancing, the more empty I felt. That void in my heart were so severe at times that I could almost feel the pain physically. To numb the pain, I went to more parties and clubs to find some sense of satisfaction.

In this pursuit of “happiness”, my grades suffered tremendously. The school put me on probation. I had no sense of



## I learned for the first time that my greatest sin was denying my need of God.

purpose or direction in my life. I thought dancing was nothing evil. It was nothing like drinking, smoking, or using drugs.

I reasoned that it was simply a nice way of exercise. I considered myself a very moral and “good” person because I had many friends. But I did not know that I had become very proud, selfish, and rebellious.

I did not want to talk to anyone who did not seem to meet my standards. I did not want to speak Chinese because I concluded that I did not want to waste my time with people who did not know the way of the American life. I was wasting my parents’ hard-earned money on my own enjoyment and not taking school seriously. I would not listen to my mother’s pleas for me to come home early at night.

I must thank God that He found me before I had the chance to start with addictions outside of music and dancing. It is very likely that I might very well end up in the path of substance abuse because I was so lost in that aimless life of mine. Even though my parents did not know about what was happening to me, our Father in heaven already knew. He stretched out His loving hand and grabbed hold of mine. And just why did Jesus want to touch someone as wicked as me? That is something I would never understand.

### TRANSFORMED BY GOD’S LOVE

What I do know is that once I received the Holy Spirit, God took away my desire

for loud music and dancing. Somehow, I did not need any of those things that used to stimulate me.

In place of the dancing, I just wanted to read the Bible and pray. In place of the pop songs, I just wanted to sing hymns to praise and thank God. I decided that I did not need any of my party friends any more. Instead, I looked forward to Sabbath every week so that I could be around God’s people.

I had such a sense of peace and joy in my heart that I no longer minded being alone. I was content with sitting quietly in my room reading the Bible or singing the few hymns I just learned. The old me was terrified of being alone. That was why I kept the speaker volume at the highest setting, in an effort to drown away that awful loneliness I felt when I was by myself.

I also noticed that I no longer needed to wear strange-looking clothes to attract people’s attention. I was happy to go out with whatever old t-shirt and jeans I had in my closet. I began to consider buying some skirts and dresses that I could wear to church. Up to that point in my life, I did not own anything feminine like a skirt or dress. I began to let my hair grow long.

The changes in me puzzled my family and even myself. No one had actually pointed out to me what I needed to do to live as a Christian. However, the Holy Spirit Himself guided me and moved me to do things that were pleasing to Him. The Spirit also taught me lessons of

humility, obedience and selflessness.

### GOD CAN TRANSFORM LIVES

It is truly amazing what God’s spirit can do to totally transform someone’s life when He chooses to. All that is required is our willingness to be open to Him and to have a simple and humble heart before Him. I’ve learned how powerful the Spirit of God can be. He guided me to Himself, even though I’ve tried to run away from Him thinking I did not need God.

When God’s spirit came into me with might, I could no longer deny His existence. I learned for the first time that my greatest sin was denying my need of God. I thought that I was in control and that I could handle my life.

But I was finally convinced by the love of Jesus, as He held my hand and let me understand how much He cared for me. Because God satisfied my empty heart with His spirit, I gained a new sense of hope and direction. I no longer wanted to live for myself. Instead, I wanted to give my life to my Maker, Savior, and Friend.

There are innumerable accounts where God totally transformed people’s lives, and it is possible for anyone to experience a transformed life today. All that is required of you is for you to recognize your need, make every effort to read and listen to His words, and have a simple and humble heart. Jesus is always ready to transform your life into a much better one.

But the question is: “Are you ready?” ★



# God Kept Andy From Harm

Juliaty Surja—Jakarta, Indonesia

Over the years, God has watched over me as I grew in His love in the True Jesus Church. He gave me a wonderful brother-in-Christ in marriage, and together we are blessed with two sons and two daughters: Steven, Linny, Andy, and Venny.

As a family, we went through many things together. I'd like to take this opportunity to impart one of God's many blessings to glorify the Lord's name, and to share how it really strengthened our faith.

## A FAMILY GETAWAY

In December 1990, my husband suggested that we take a family vacation at beach Pelabuhan Ratu, in Sukabumi. Pelabuhan Ratu is a well known tourist attraction. We had never taken our children there

before, and my father also recommended the place because he had been there when he was younger and thought it was a great place to take the kids.

At that time, Steven was eleven, Linny was seven, Andy was six, and Venny was five years old. We packed up our bags and arrived at our destination in the afternoon. The children were so happy and they were impatient to get into the water for a swim. Since it was raining, we told them to take a rest at the hotel and wait for the rain to stop.

Early the next morning, Steven, Linny, and Andy woke up and they were very excited to go to the beach, so my father took them to rent swimsuits and accompanied them while they played in the water.

When Venny woke up, I took her

with me to join the rest of the troop, while my husband came later. Venny swam in the hotel's pool while Linny and I played by the sand at the seashore, and we had a good view of the boys who were swimming at the sea not far from us. Everyone happily enjoyed their activities.

Periodically, Andy, who is an energetic boy, would walk back and forth from the sea to where Venny and I played on the sand, even stopping by the swimming pool, to check up on what everyone is doing.

Around eight o'clock in the morning, Steven came up to me and asked, "Mom, did you see Andy?" To which I replied, "Wasn't he playing with all of you by the water?" I told him to look for Andy by the pool.

Pretty soon, we were looking all around. My husband and father also noticed the commotion and they came over to see what had happened. When my husband realized we couldn't find our child, he told me that he had asked Andy to stop playing by the water but didn't see Andy after he walked off the seashore.

By now, I was panicking because Andy was lost! Helplessly surveying the shoreline, I cried out to the Lord, "Lord, please help Andy!"



A verse in the Bible came into my mind: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps 46:1).

### A CRY FOR HELP

Realizing we have to look for Andy immediately, everyone split up in different directions to find our little boy, but we returned empty handed. When we saw the swimming float we rented for him wash up on the shore, we thought that Andy could've been swept away by the great waves.

We also overheard others on the beach say that someone almost drowned. At this point, I was beside myself and I knew that I had to pray to God and ask for His help. A verse in the Bible came into my mind: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps 46:1).

My husband asked me to go back to the hotel and pray, while he and Steven went to the hotel's security staff to report

a missing child and to ask for assistance in the search.

On the way back to the hotel with Linny, Venny, and my father, I kept praying to the Lord but my father was less optimistic. He was not a believer at that time and his immediate reaction was hopelessness. He kept saying, "It's over, it's over!" thinking that Andy was probably dead.

When we got back to the hotel, my father stood on the porch and bleakly looked out to the sea. I gave Venny and Linny their baths and I asked them to pray with me. With tears flowing down my face, I said to the Lord:

*Lord, please forgive us because we didn't take good care of the son You gave us. Now Andy is gone and we don't know what has happened to him. But we are convinced that You are the one we believe and worship. You are the almighty and living God, and You are ever merciful. You always keep and protect Your children. According to Your will, please let Andy be alive, for nothing is impossible for You, O Lord. But if it is not in Your will to give him back to us, please let us find Andy's body so that we can give him a proper burial. I pray that You would grant us a steadfast and strong heart to face whatever reality is before us. Lord, we put our hope in You and we entrust Andy's life into Your hand. Please listen to our prayers and do according to Your will. May Your name be glorified always. Hallelujah, Amen.*

After I poured the burden of my heart in prayer and put Andy's life in God's hand, I felt much peace and I felt the weight of the burden lifted from me.

I felt stronger to accept whatever came next.

### HE IS ALIVE!

Not long after, a hotel security staff phoned us to confirm that we were the family whose son was missing. I gave the personnel a description of Andy and humbly asked that the security guards do their best to find my son.

Steven and my husband finally came back to the hotel. After they cleaned up, all of us knelt down as a family and prayed for God's help. Then we brought the children downstairs to have breakfast since none of us had eaten all morning.

We left our hotel room and when the doors opened downstairs in the lobby, a security staff saw us and put down his phone and asked if we were the family of the missing child. When he realized we were he said, "Come on, hurry up and follow me!"

My husband turned towards me and told me to go back into the hotel room to get our car keys, just in case we might need it. So I turned on my heels to get the keys; all the while praying in my heart for some good news.

When I finally got downstairs and the elevator doors opened, I saw my husband enter the hotel lobby carrying Andy, who was still alive. Praise the Lord!

From the puffiness in his eyes we knew he had been crying. We took him back to the hotel room and gave him a bath. Then we knelt down again to pray and give thanks for God's help. My father, who doesn't pray because of his unbelief, knelt down for the first time to pray. Thank God!

After breakfast and when Andy finally calmed down, we asked him where he had been. He told us that he had walked

off the seashore as his dad told him. And even though he had walked back and forth between from the beach beforehand, for some reason he couldn't see us.

While he was searching for us, he dropped his swimming glasses twice. He had picked it up the first time but the second time it was washed into the sea. He kept walking until he saw a bridge. When he stepped onto the bridge, he realized that the foundation of the bridge was loose and it rocked back and forth.

Andy was scared he might fall through the bridge so he turned back but by then he was completely lost, and he had wandered into a deserted place. Frightened and lost, he started to cry. Some people heard his sobs and found him, and they took him to the hotel to report a lost child.

I really thank God for watching over Andy and keeping him from any harm. I also thank God for reuniting our family.

Through this ordeal, we were strengthened in our faith and we were convinced that the God we worship is the almighty God, and we have to trust in the Lord—to rely on Him to give us peace so that we will not fear when we are faced with trials. As long as we cry out to Him, He will surely help us.

May all the praise, thanksgiving, and honor be given to our glorious Lord! Amen. ★

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# The Widow's Oil

Vincent Yeung—Cambridge, United Kingdom

## SHE ASKED FOR HELP

The unsung hero behind the story of the widow's oil is not the prophet Elisha but an unnamed woman whose husband was once among the company of prophets.

Her plight was succinctly described in 2 Kings 4:1-7: her husband was a faithful man who met with an untimely death, leaving behind two young sons and no possessions for the family to rely on. The sons faced impending slavery and the woman felt hopeless about her family's situation.

Her reality did not seem to concur with the promise of God, for we know that the Lord does not let the righteous go hungry (Prov 10:3). But here was the widow—barely subsisting on a jar of oil.

Even though her situation did not seem to be in line with God's promise, she retained her faith in God and went to the prophet for help. Her decision sounds trivial—of course she would have asked

for Elisha's help, whom else could she go to except her husband's mentor?

Actually, it was a great leap of faith for her to overcome her own doubts and prejudices when she was faced with this insurmountable adversity.

There are many examples in the Bible of heroes that have momentarily faltered in their faith when their own reality fell short of God's promises.

Abraham in his early years went down to Egypt because of the famine; contradicting the promise of God. When Elijah was pursued for his life after his victory over the false prophets, he fled and asked for death out of fear of Jezebel. Though the disciples had followed Jesus Christ and saw many miracles, they all fled and deserted Him when He was captured in the garden of Gethsemane.

The widow's actions might seem small but her simple decision to ask for

help from Elisha was a mark of great faith on her part, because even great heroes before and after her struggled with their faith when faced with a difficult situation.

In peace and prosperity it is very easy to say “trust in the Lord”, but when darkness befalls and there is no way out, are you able to repeat these words?



**God will not and cannot work miracles in people who are doubtful of His almighty power and intention (Mk 6:5-6).**

Would you stay and wait for God's will when His promise appears false and unfulfilled during trials? Do you bother or care anymore when His promises do not seem to materialize?

### **SHE ENDURED TO THE END**

God will not and cannot work miracles in people who are doubtful of His almighty power and intention (Mk 6:5-6).

God's word was fulfilled only under the full submission and the immovable trust of the widow. But His response was not instantaneous. On the contrary, He commanded her to fill the jars, pour the oil, and, in the process, subjected her to a trial.

Doubts may have started to creep in: would the oil stop flowing when she paused? What would happen if the boys stumbled? What if they lost some oil in between the jar-swooping? Every time she tilted the jar backward for the next jar, no doubt it appeared in her mind that the oil may stop flowing. In that respect, each new jar would form a challenge and a test of her trust in the Lord.

In the same vein, our experiences with God are a process and not an event. When we pray to God to heal either ourselves or our relations, God does not respond in split seconds. There will be ups and downs in this healing process, and we are bound to have setbacks. Only by relying on God will we be able to see

through the whole journey. The widow experienced God's promise fulfilled because she remained focused and steadfast in Him until the end.

As we carry out God's work, we will also encounter successes and failures. When we learn to submit to Him and trust in His judgement, we will be able to cope in all situations. The Bible says:

*If we endure, We shall also reign with Him.*

*If we deny Him, He also will deny us.*

*If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself. (2 Tim 2:12-13)*

God remains faithful and true to His word. But if we are faithless and give up easily, His promises will not come to us but to those who are able to endure to the end (Mt 3:9).

### **SHE WORKED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS**

While the widow was filling up the jars, she closed the doors probably because she didn't want to be distracted. Perhaps

her neighbor may have wanted to chat with her in the process of pouring the oil. They may have wanted their jars back. They may have been nosy and interrupted her by asking what she was doing and why she was doing it.

She did not want to take that chance. The whole miracle was conducted behind closed doors. She wanted to follow God's instruction to the last letter. She did not want to assume that it was acceptable to be lax in God's work and instruction. Do we have the same determination?

We often put God to one side, convincing ourselves that we can pick Him up at a later date. We have our priorities, don't we? Those projects at work, assignments at school, and tax returns have to be done on set dates. Surely God can wait. He has eternity ahead of Him, but we have only years, don't we?

God does not want us to be distracted in our relationship with Him, in prayer (Mt 6:6), or in our service (2 Tim 2:4). Just as the widow shut herself away from the world, we should remember that miracles often appear behind closed doors—the time when God's reign is ushered into our inner world and He extends a personal invitation for us to respond. And the means to keep focused is by shutting ourselves from the outside world and reflecting on our relationship with God.

Praying behind closed doors, our problems are resolved, our illnesses are healed, and our hearts are comforted. All these are personal interactions with God. Behind closed doors, we can grow in our service to Him through deep reflection, introspection, and perception. And we are able to see things differently, because God is at work in our life—making every

minor event a miracle in itself.

### GOD'S GRACE IS SUFFICIENT

When the widow and her sons filled up all of the empty jars, the oil stopped flowing. And the profit she made selling the oil was sufficient to repay her debts and provide for their subsistence. God knew that the widow had enough.

God has given us a rightful measure sufficient to sustain our needs. We feel dissatisfied because we always compare ourselves with others. Not only do we compare material possessions, but also spiritual gifts and achievements in church.

We feel jealous because someone is better than us. We feel proud because we are better than others. We feel upset when someone treads on our toes by trespassing into our domain.

These sensations of achievement and superiority and failure and dejection are the result of our ego. We want to satisfy our ego more than our desire to please God. So, God stalls our advancements because He knows that this is appropriate for us.

Paul preached the gospel with the power and might of God, he healed those who were sick, and he cast out demons from those who were possessed. Yet, he failed to obtain healing for himself.

Paul's ailment hurt his ego more than his physical body—a healer who couldn't heal himself did no good to his reputation. He was constantly aware of his disability (Gal 4:13, 15). But God reminded Paul that His grace was sufficient, measured, and appropriate (2 Cor 12:9).

His blessings are always sufficient, but not excessive. Only when we are

aware, content with, and accept what God has allotted us will we be able to find inner peace and true satisfaction in the Lord (1 Tim 6:6).



**He wants us to acknowledge that, in good times and in bad times, we have to always return to Him. This is the true expression of our faith.**

### SHE RETURNED FOR COUNSEL

With a heart of thanksgiving, the widow returned to the prophet Elisha for direction on how to make use of the newfound wealth. Just as she acted on faith to go to the prophet when she was in trouble, she went back to him for counsel. Both seem to be trivial acts when, in fact, they are really not.

Most people forget about God when their requests are answered. They go about their way feeling as if life is now looking up and there's no need for God. They can now make use of their good fortune and look after themselves!

Take the example of the ten lepers. When Jesus healed them from their illness, only one returned to Him to praise God (Lk 17:11-19). We can see that the majority of people fall into this problem of forgetfulness.

What about us? Once we've resolved our problems, do we need God any more? We have been healed, we are healthy—we can get back to our normal life; back to our old routine, right? When we are healed, granted a gift or material

blessing, don't we have the right of possession of our health, gift, or wealth?

God has His purpose for every individual, and He has a blueprint for our existence. We are all His work, made for His service and glorification (Isa 60:21; cf Eph 2:10). He wants us to acknowledge that, in good times and in bad times, we have to always return to Him. This is the true expression of our faith.

The widow understood clearly that the oil was not hers. Logically, the oil was for her use to repay her debt and support her family. But she also knew that there may have been a higher purpose that was beyond her comprehension.

This thought prompted her to return to the prophet for further guidance. Both in need and in plenty, she knew to return to God.

What if God had asked her to give the oil to the poor? Nobody would like to contemplate this possibility more than Abraham wanted to sacrifice the precious son he had been promised and waited for so many years.

This widow had nothing to lose when she asked the prophet for direction. However, she might have lost everything—her wealth, her sons, and her life—when she returned.

The challenge she encountered was stronger after she had seen the oil than before her plea for help, but she exhibited great faith by denying her very existence before God. This is the mark of true reliance on the Lord—her return.

**A**s we study the widow's troubles, we naturally assume that God is part of this miracle story when, in actuality, His name is not mentioned anywhere. The phrase "the word of God came to" does

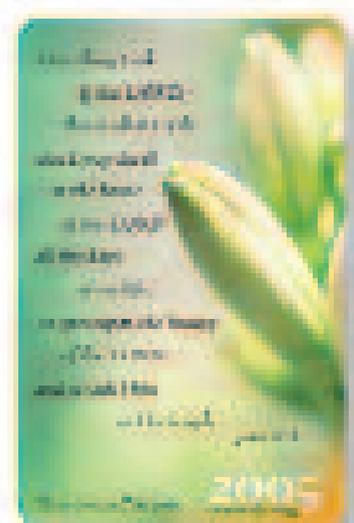
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not appear in the text, nor is there any implication that God commanded Elisha to instruct the widow.

Even though His name is not recorded in this story, we clearly know that God inspired the prophet to instruct the widow, since we know that a prophet carries out God's instructions. We can also see that He inspired the widow to remain faithful in Him and ask for His help because, from the lives of these two people, we see the hand of God through their acts of faith. Every goodness is from the Father (Jas 1:17), for He is the one who began all these good works (Phil 1:6).

Can we see the word "God" written all over our life? If we fail to see God in our life, then there is a mismatch between biblical faith and personal reality.

So, let us look more attentively for God's work in our life and respond to Him by completing the good work until the day of Christ Jesus! ★



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# Spreading The Gospel

“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.’” (Mk 16:15-16).

Since Jesus spoke these words and ascended to heaven, the great commission He left us has gone into the corners of this world, and we are blessed to be a part of that plan. Though simple the instruction, how we go about carrying out this work of spreading the gospel requires much effort.

But the Lord Jesus did not leave us to work alone. He gives us His teachings as our guideline, so that we can examine our efforts to see if they are centered on Him. He sends us the power of His spirit to open the ears of the people and to move the hearts of men. And He tells us He is with us—that He is only a prayer away.

# Pray to the Lord of Harvest

Adapted sermon by Gien-Hung Chen—California, USA

## JESUS UNDERSTANDS THE TIMES

Jesus went about cities and villages, teaching in synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and disease among the people.

He was moved with compassion for the multitude because they were weary and scattered—like sheep having no shepherd. He understood the people's needs and He knew how to heal them.

Recognizing their dilemma He said to His disciples:

*The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. (Mt 9:37-38)*

As He attended to the needs of the

crowd, He also took time to teach His disciples to follow in His footsteps.

Jesus understands that those of us who are working hard for Him cannot possibly do everything or fill every role in the church. So He asks us to pray that God will move the hearts of others to come out to serve Him as His harvesters. This is also our duty.

Very appropriately, Jesus spent His time on this earth not only telling us to pray, but also teaching us how to do so. In His darkest hour, when people were tired and hopeless and the disciples slept, Jesus encouraged them not to be disheartened—to pray and not give up.

We often focus on God's ministry by simply doing the work going about the

cities and villages, busying ourselves at church, and wondering why there are only a few of us participating in the spreading of the gospel.

But do we truly understand the times and the condition of the harvest and what it needs?

Actually, the Lord knows the situation of the church and the world outside of it. He knows that the laborers are few, so He reminds the few who are serving Him to do something more than just the labor—He tells them to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send out more laborers to help.

Often times, it is we, the workers, who don't understand the times, so our efforts are not in sync with God's plan. When our efforts to spread the gospel fizzles out, we get discouraged and lose hope because we don't see the fertile harvest as God sees it.

So what does He want us to see?

In this short command that He left with the disciples, we can learn much about what the Lord requires of us as His workers so that we can effectively evangelize to all the nations.

### DO WE UNDERSTAND THE TIMES?

Harvest season is arguably the jolliest time of the year. This is when all the workers and the masters come out in celebration with song and dance; with wine and merriness. After toiling under the hot sun to reap the fruits of the harvest, everyone comes out to enjoy the works of their hands.

But the window of time that the workers get to reap what they have sowed is not very long, and the shorter the timeframe, the more valuable the product. For example, in the state of

California, sweet peppers are extremely expensive because it is available only in the summertime, whereas lettuce is very affordable because it can be found all year round.

This is the same way with the Lord's harvest; except He is reaping souls and not agriculture, and we are the workers He has sent. This type of harvest is the rarest and most valuable of all kinds, and the window of time He has given is very, very short. And when it is over, there is no second season. This is the last one.

If we really understood this grace period the Lord has given us to spread the gospel of peace, our focus should be where the Lord directed—on prayer.

But many times, we find that the workers focus too much on peripheral things. Things like: Which caterer to use so visitors and friends can be well fed? Who can deliver the most heart-piercing sermon? Who has the best voice to sing in choir?

These, of course, are simply examples, but they should be taken into consideration should we organize an evangelistic event for people to come to listen to the gospel. But if they occupy more time and energy and become the center of discussion than the amount of time we spend praying to God, then it is time for us to examine our direction and motives.

If we really understood the times, we would spend more time sowing the seeds in our non-believing friends and family; taking every opportunity to witness to them and to intercede on their behalf.

We would be brave to preach to our friends and colleagues at school or at work, and we would worry less about how they might perceive us if they knew we were devout Christians. We would

not hesitate or withhold the message of salvation because we didn't personally think \_\_\_\_\_ that a particular individual was ready—we would focus less on ourselves and be able to see the needs of others.

If we realize that there are masses still yet to receive Christ and that there is a shortage of time, we would pray to God to find us helpers and coworkers to gather as much of the harvest before it is too late.

We've discovered a harvest far more valuable than sweet peppers, yet we often reap them like lettuce.



**This type of harvest is the rarest and most valuable of all kinds, and the window of time He has given is very, very short. And when it is over, there is no second season. This is the last one.**

### SUMMON FOR GOD'S POWER

The first lesson on prayer that the Lord Jesus taught was how to be selfless. The instructions He left for His disciples as recorded in Matthew 9:37-38 was for them to pray for the laborers and not for themselves. He was emphasizing a selfless prayer.

Of course, Jesus is not saying that we shouldn't pray for ourselves. Indeed, a large part of the content in the Lord's Prayer is to pray for ourselves. But Jesus reminds us not to forget the unselfish prayer: to pray for other workers.



**When we pray, we summon up God's power and confess that the successes of the work of our hands are not dependent on us or our own authority but on God's.**

But why did Jesus ask such a peculiar prayer? Is it true that He doesn't know that the harvest is plenty? If He knew, would He not by default send the workers Himself? Why was it necessary for the disciples and believers to remind God to do such an important thing?

Prayer is a mystery and a power, and much of the effectiveness of church work is accomplished through prayer. God knows that the harvest is plenty but He also waits for our prayers.

When we pray, we summon up God's power and confess that the successes of the work of our hands are not dependent on us or our own authority but on God's. We also acknowledge that the ripening harvest needs the Lord—the people of this world need God's grace and His salvation.

We need to pronounce that the treasure of the gospel belongs to Him, and so do the harvest, the laborers, the glory of the church, and everything else in between. When we do, He will open up doors to help us complete His work. After all, it is "His harvest," and it is the Lord Jesus that gives the increase (cf. 1 Cor 3:6).

So when we pray for the evangelistic work of the church, we shouldn't underestimate the privilege and authority that He has given us to ask in His name.

### Signal Our Partners

The gospel of Luke records the incident that convinced Peter to follow the Lord

Jesus Christ. While Peter had already resigned to go home after having caught no fish for the day, Jesus told him to launch his boat into the deep water and cast down his net (Lk 5:1-4).

Though he was well aware that his entire day's experience had yielded nothing, he listened to Jesus' instructions. When he and his coworkers let down the net, however, it caught a school of fish so great in number that it threatened to break the net.

*So, they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. (Lk 5:7)*

When we catch souls, it is the same way.

Since He initiated the latter rain almost one hundred years ago, the Lord has slowly opened doors to places that the gospel could not reach before. As our time draws closer to the end, we often find that we don't have the means to catch all the lost souls that He has guided to us.

Therefore, in an effort to redeem each one, Peter called out instinctively for his partners to help. We need to learn to do the same. We need to summon God's power so He will work with us; otherwise, we would catch no fish even if we tried on our own. And they would always be slightly out of our reach though we wouldn't understand why.

Thus, we ought to do our part and go out and signal our partners to join us, and those that the Lord of the harvest send for will heed our calling.





**In fact, for the most part, it is God who usually waits for us, though we often think we're the ones waiting for His timing.**

When we truly understand the times from God's perspective, calling out for helpers becomes second nature. The signal would be urgent, pressing, and beckoning.

### HE OFFERED THE FIRST PRAYER

The Lord Jesus said that we must first pray for His work, His kingdom and His righteousness. If we truly delve into God's work and pray for His kingdom and righteousness, then we truly believe the promise that He gives us here—that the Lord of the harvest will indeed send out workers into the field.

We need to ask God to increase our faith, and we need to draw ourselves closer to and be united with Him. Then our prayers will be heard. This is the promise that Jesus gives time and again in the Gospel of John. He said, "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (Jn 14:13).

This is the kind of prayer we have to offer as often as possible—that the Lord of the harvest send out workers to reap what has been sown. Who is the Lord of the harvest? It is Jesus Christ Himself, who came as a human being for the sole purpose of planting the seed and bringing the possibility of salvation.

Interestingly, the Lord of the harvest has already set the example by offering

the first prayer. He was also the very first worker that our heavenly Father sent. But His work has been completed (cf. Jn 17:1-4), and He has given us the authority to continue what He left behind, as we see in His heart-wrenching prayer to His Father:

*I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours. You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours....As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. (Jn 17:6-9,18)*

If we feel that our church needs more workers, then this kind of prayer is imperative, and we are assured that this is the kind of prayer that God awaits. In fact, for the most part, it is God who usually waits for us, though we often think we're the ones waiting for His timing. If we don't pray, how can we summon up His power?

From the Lord Jesus' intercession on our behalf, we see how much He loves us and how He has truly given us a special status; making us heavenly royalty. Each of us is His worker; therefore, all of us should exercise this privilege and resolve to reach out to the people in this world—lost souls in search of God and His gospel of peace. ★



# “He Who Has An Ear Let Him Hear!”

Adapted sermon by Elder Hsieh—Taiwan

**On five different occasions in the four gospels, Jesus says, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”—three times in the book of Matthew, once in the book of Mark, and once in the book of Luke. The actual total is seven times if each occurrence of the parable of the sower is counted separately. Including the eight times it is recorded in the book of Revelation, this statement appears 15 times in the Bible, 13 of which are spoken.**

Among all of our facial features, the function of the ear is to hear and to listen. Everyone has ears, but some people are born with perfect ears, while others are born with imperfect ones. That is, they are partially or fully deaf. The ears to which Jesus refers, however, are not perfect ears but, rather, spiritual ones.

He is instructing the listener to pay heed to an especially important teaching. “To hear” is not the simple act of hearing but also of obeying. Unlike many who “seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand” (Mt 13:13), we must be attentive and obey Jesus’ teachings so that His words are not spoken in vain.

We are also entrusted with the mission to impart the message of salvation onto others but if we do not heed or listen to the Lord’s teachings, then our hearers will also listen in vain, and His message would fall on deaf ears.

Therefore, before we instruct others

to accept the good news of Jesus Christ, we need to make sure that the seed of the gospel is, first and foremost, firmly planted in us.

And from this proclamation, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” we learn several teachings about how we ought to preach.

## ACKNOWLEDGE JESUS IS CHRIST

*And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear! (Mt 11:14-15)*

Jesus described John the Baptist as the “Elijah who [was] to come.” What was the importance of his coming? Why did Jesus call for those who had ears to hear? Who was Elijah?

Elijah was a great prophet of the Lord whose victory over 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel showed the Israelites

the one true God and caused them to turn their hearts back to Him (1 Kgs 18:20-40). This was the same Elijah who “[turned] the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest [the Lord] come and strike the earth with a curse,” as recorded in the book of Malachi (Mal 4:5-6).

God would send another Elijah to the Israelites before the apocalypse. This Elijah of the New Testament was John the Baptist, whose mission was to “turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers.”

He was the person who prepared the way for the Lord Jesus (Is 40:3; Mal 3:1; Mt 3:3; Mk 1:1-3). He came “baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Mk 1:4; Lk 3:3). This baptism of repentance prepared the hearts of those who were baptized to receive the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:4).

He bore witness for Jesus, saying, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me’” (Jn 1:29-30).

Today, we are entrusted with the mission to turn the hearts of men back to the heart of the heavenly Father, to bring others to repentance, and to unite them with the Shepherd.

All our efforts point to the Lord Jesus Christ and not ourselves, so that all will come to accept Him as their Lord and Savior. We are not preaching ourselves or our own glory, but the glory of the Son of God.



**All our efforts point to the Lord Jesus Christ and not ourselves, so that all will come to accept Him as their Lord and Savior.**

## ENSURE OUR OWN SALVATION

### The Parable of the Sower (Mt 13:3-9; Mk 4:3-9; Lk 8:4-15)

In this parable, the same seed was sown in four different places and produced four different crops. The people who received seed by the wayside were those from whom Satan would snatch away the word of God to prevent them from believing and being saved, because they heard His word and did not understand it.

The people who received the seed on stony places were the ones who heard the word and received it with joy, but their belief was temporary because the word did not take root in their heart. When they were tempted (or persecuted), they gave up.

Those who received the seed among the thorns were the ones who heard the word but were unfruitful because they were choked by the cares, riches, and pleasures of the world. The seed that fell on good ground represents the people who heard the word, kept it in their good, honest heart, and patiently bore fruit (Lk 8:4-15).

However, there are various types of good ground, which is why there were thirty, sixty, or hundredfold yields of crops (Mt 13:9, Mk 4:8). This parable tells us that it is very difficult for a person

to obtain salvation. Only one out of four people is fruitful.

Those who are fruitful bear different types of fruits, just as those who receive the Holy Spirit bear different fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). These fruits of the Spirit will be important in determining salvation on Judgment Day (Rev 20:11-13).

### The Parable of the Tares (Mt 13:36-43)

This parable tells us that Jesus purchased the church, which is His body, with His own blood (Act 20:28; Eph 1:23). The seeds that were sown were good, but the devil came and sowed tares among the wheat. So when the grain sprouted and produced a crop, the tares also appeared.

The owner, fearing that gathering up the tares would also uproot the wheat, ordered his servants to leave the tares alone. The tares represent the members in church who not only are unfruitful but also hinder the growth of the wheat.

These members perhaps should have been but were not excommunicated for fear that doing so would adversely affect the faith of their family members and cause them to stop coming to church. As long as these members do not “leaven” the entire congregation (1 Cor 5:6-7), they will be allowed to remain in church to be left for God to judge.

On judgment day the Son of man, the Lord Jesus, will send His angels to gather out from His kingdom (the church) all those who offend and practice lawlessness, and cast them into the furnace of fire, where there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth (Mt 13:41-42).

This is what Jesus meant when He said, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My

Father in heaven” (Mt 7:21). We need to ask ourselves: Am I a wheat that will be harvested and stored in heaven, or am I a tare that will be cast into the furnace of fire?

Satan is always lurking to turn people away from God, and he works extra hard on those who understand the great commission to save souls. Therefore, since each of us is given this commission, each of us is also susceptible to Satan’s snare.

From this parable and a few other parables Jesus taught (c.f. parable of the dragnet, Mt 13:47-50; parable of the wedding feast, Mt 22:1-14), we know that few will be saved in this world, which is why Jesus told us to listen closer.

Therefore, it is important that we ensure our own salvation while we evangelize to others. In fact, the more we

who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

## HAVE THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE

*So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple. Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear! (Lk 14:33-35)*

These verses teach us that if we want to participate in the work of spreading the gospel, we must have a spirit of sacrifice; forsaking all our worldly cares to bear our own cross and follow Him. We must ask ourselves whether we have this type of spirit to follow Him to the end. If not, it would be better if we did not try to be His disciples, lest we be mocked.

sacrificed Himself for mankind and thereby brought into being many sons of God (Rom 5:6-11).

Moreover, we must be the salt of the world (Mt 5:13). We must sacrifice ourselves to “adjust” the evil “flavor” (or trend) of the world for the better, exhibiting love and contributing good to mankind just as Jesus did. Only then can we be considered the salt of the world.

A disciple who does not have this type of love is like salt that has lost its flavor, which is not fit for use and will be thrown out (i.e. scorned by men and looked upon as dung). From this teaching, we realize how difficult it is to be a disciple of the Lord. If we are unable to sacrifice ourselves and commit to the great commission out of love for others, we would be no better than nonbelievers.

We must learn how to show love toward others so that Jesus has not taught us in vain and we are worthy to be called His disciples. So once again, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”★



**Let us not lose our own place in heaven in an effort to save another. Let us be edifying examples to believers and nonbelievers alike, and when our Lord Jesus comes again and hears us saying, “Lord, Lord,” He would let us in.**

live out the good Christian life and follow Jesus’ teachings and do His will, the better our yields (and the fruits we bear) will be—both in ourselves and in the way we affect our hearers.

Let us not lose our own place in heaven in an effort to save another. Let us be edifying examples to believers and nonbelievers alike, and when our Lord Jesus comes again and hears us saying, “Lord, Lord,” He would let us in.

This is why Jesus, at the end of the parable of the sower, commanded, “He

This type of sacrifice is very precious, as indicated by Jesus in this teaching. The value of salt is determined by its flavor; it can be used for seasoning and preserving food. For salt to give its flavor, it must be dissolved (i.e. sacrifice itself). Hence, it best represents the spirit of sacrifice.

Jesus once said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain” (Jn 12:24). This teaches us the efficacy of sacrifice: Jesus, like a grain of wheat,

# Report On The Pioneering Work In Nord-Kivu, Republic of Congo

## *(August 4-15, 2004)*

YM Yang—Paris, France

### I. GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Goma is the provincial capital of Nord-Kivu which is in the eastern region of Congo. Close to a lake, Goma is situated at the border between Congo and Rwanda. In January 2004, the eruption of a neighboring volcano destroyed parts of the city.

According to reports by the French Press Agency, the Region of Great Lakes is one of the areas in the world with the most upheaval. Goma is situated in this region, with neighboring Rwanda in the east, Uganda less than one hundred kilometers to the northeast, and Burundi about one hundred kilometers to the southeast.

Between 1998 and 2003, three million people died in the civil war in Congo. Another civil strife since 1993 in Burundi claimed more than 300,000 casualties. In 1994, the genocide in Rwanda also claimed 800,000 lives. Since 1986, the civil war in the northern region of Uganda claimed more than 100,000 lives and forced 1.6 million people to migrate.

Currently, the rebel forces are active in the mountainous regions between Goma and Bukavu, which is the provincial capital of Sud-Kivu about one hundred kilometers off Goma. Bukavu was occupied by the rebel forces for about a week between the end of June and beginning of July.

In this region, the Church of Jesus Christ, whose French equivalent is entitled Église de Jésus-Christ (EJC), has been active in spreading the gospel.



### II. AN INTRODUCTION OF THE EJC

In 1992, Banyanga, an EJC minister, and another coworker received revelations regarding the Sabbath, baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, footwashing, and the observance of the Ten Commandments. Since the ministry began in 1995, the EJC has 11 churches with resident ministers and 8 places of worship without resident ministers and few sacred workers.

The EJC has about 1,800 members. (The EJC distinguishes a church from a place of worship not by membership, but by whether it has a resident minister.) We understand that, except for 4 churches reachable by highway, the remaining 15 locations are in the deep mountains or areas rampant with guerilla warfare and robbery.

During this missionary trip, no one came from the 8 places of worship that are in the “extremely dangerous zone” (a minister was killed not long before). But holy workers from 10 of the 11 remaining churches came and accepted baptism.

Resident ministers from 8 churches also attended and received baptism. One of the ministers had to go back because of the long journey home (he had to travel 2-3 day and cover more than 180 kilometers of mountainous roads by car and foot, only to arrive for the first time at Goma!) The other 7 resident ministers stayed for the seminar on August 11-13 and the second baptism took place on the 14.

Pastor Banyanga, the Chair of EJC, and Evangelist Baraka, the National Overseer, are not considered resident ministers. On a regular basis, both of them travel to all the districts and pastor every two to five months. Not long ago, when an EJC minister was killed by robbers, Banyanga was on the scene but had a narrow escape.

## A. Faith

1. **General faith:** The Bible is the basis of all beliefs; it is the only solution to their faith. During discussions, they insisted that we show them the biblical basis for our beliefs, including the name of our church! Each worker thinks independently, which resulted in constant arguments during classes.
2. **Godhead, church:** They believe in one true God and one church (EJC originally believed that she is the only church that saves). They oppose celebrating festivals that mingle the sacred with the worldly, such as Christmas.
3. **Baptism:** They baptize in the name of Jesus Christ in living water, with full immersion and face upward. They also practice excommunication.
4. **Footwashing:** They believe that those whose feet have not been washed cannot be saved. But they practice “mutual” footwashing among the disciples, not the “one-way” footwashing Jesus performed for His disciples.
5. **Holy Communion:** They partake of one unleavened bread and one jar of pure grape juice. To minimize burning while baking, some sacred workers add a little oil.
6. **Sabbath:** They believe in observing the Sabbath by grace but in stricter guidelines than our True Jesus Church. Services begin at 9am and end at 4pm, with no breaks or lunch.
7. **Holy Spirit:** They believe that speaking in tongues is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and one cannot begin speaking in tongues immediately in a prayer.
8. **Ordination of holy workers:** Holy workers are ordained after they demonstrate the gifts of the Holy Spirit in long periods of services; through prayers and under the observations of the congregation. Most ministers and evangelists either have personal assets or are employed. They do sacred work so that they will “not be unworthy of God-given gifts.” They do not demand to be provided for by the gospel. Regular church offerings are not enough to sustain the livelihood of the ministers.
9. **Liturgy:** Hymns and praise music play a large role during services. Baraka composed every hymn, drum music, or dance we heard during our stay there. Through interpretation, I found that the lyrics consist mostly of stories told in words and phrases that retell events from Genesis to Revelation and describe the standards of spiritual living. The reason for this is because education is not prevalent in the country and not everyone can read or afford a Bible. So he turned Bible stories and spiritual teachings into hymns for the congregation to recite and remember. “Hymns” become “sermons that can be sung.” We have instructed Baraka to familiarize himself thoroughly with our doctrines and turn them into hymns that can be taught to the congregation.
10. **Marriage and dress code:** They practice monogamy of one husband and one wife. Any member who has extramarital affair is excommunicated. (So far, the only excommunication performed in the EJC was due to sexual immorality.) They believe contraception is not biblical. Consequently, families with more than five children are prevalent. Women are discouraged from wearing pants, but scarves are allowed (not for the purpose of “covering their heads,” but because they have short hair.)



## LITURGY:

*[Baraka] turned Bible stories and spiritual teachings into hymns for the congregation to recite and remember. “Hymns” become “sermons that can be sung.”*

## B. Organization

The EJC is a religious organization officially registered with the government. There is no concept of a “founder.” Holy workers are differentiated by their gifts: pastors, evangelists, deacons or deaconesses, apostles, prophets, and elders. Currently, we are aware that Banyanga, Baraka, and Zaire (the resident minister of Goma) are full-time workers whose living expenses come from meager tithes. “Special funds” are initiated to pay for special projects in church. Most holy workers are volunteers and are equals as members of the body before God:

- Pastor and evangelist: responsible for preaching the gospel and church administration
- Deacon: handle general administrative tasks
- Elder: likened to an “advisor”
- Prophet: a member who has the gift of prophecy
- Apostle: To the EJC, an apostle refers exclusively to “one who i sent.” Based on the fact that the two brothers who were with Titus were called “apostles” (2 Cor 8:23).
- Nine holy workers form the Executive Committee, with Banyanga as Chairman.

The general feeling is that the EJC conforms to the teachings of the Bible and operates harmoniously. They are worthy of our consideration and emulation.

To discuss the truth with us, the EJC made full preparation despite shortage and cost (the US dollar is their common currency). They printed service and visitation schedules, evangelical invitations, and other publications. Other holy workers wore name tags.

They also registered this event with the provincial government and local agencies and applied for service permission. In addition, during the week of August 4-10, they had to arrange lodging for 200 people from 10 churches. (Separated by gender, the members slept in two tents that were put up in a chapel built on hard volcanic rocks that came from volcanic eruptions).

Meal preparation and lodging were no easy tasks. According to the coworkers who were in charge of food, they spent about 25 USD per day, which provided them with mostly rice, red bean and corn flour.

*May the Lord show His grace and bless this literary ministry that can benefit many African countries.*

### 1. A newly established literary ministry team

To maintain the purity of the gospel and to avoid discrepancies in oral interpretation and the resulting misconceptions, we coordinated with local workers to form a “Translation Team” before we left Goma on August 15. On the last day of our trip, the team had translated the French version of *Our Basic Beliefs*, published by the International Assembly of the True Jesus Church, into Swahili.

Along with the French version of the by-laws needed for church registration, the team sent these translations for us to review! The next day, I made slight changes in the layout and returned the documents to them. I requested that they proof-read the translation before publication and registration with the government.

I had the chance to coordinate and share reflections with coworkers responsible for the English-speaking African areas. Everyone was surprised by how quickly the Goma team completed the translation. Thanks to the Lord’s grace. In the beginning of September, these coworkers will bring a copy of the translation to Kenya.

The French version of *Fundamentals of Salvation*, which is a compilation of Elder John Yang’s *Essential Biblical Doctrines* and Elder SY Kuo’s *Questions and Answers about the Truth*, have detailed introductions to, and clear explanations about, our church beliefs.

We had initially hoped that the Goma team would translate the five basic doctrines and the topic of church, for a total of six chapters that span more than one hundred pages. On August 25, the team wrote and told us that the publication is substantive, and they proactively decided to start translating all twelve chapters of the book (about 250 pages) into Swahili. On September 8, they wrote again and said they were about to complete the translation and hoped we could decide on its publication!

May the Lord show His grace and bless this literary ministry that can benefit many African countries. With these translated works, the truth will penetrate more deeply in these regions, and we will not have to worry about ambiguities resulting from inaccurate translations of sermons.

*After staying with them for more than 10 days, we witnessed that they are better than us in their simplicity and unswerving determination. I could almost feel what Abraham felt; I thought the people here do not fear God (cf. Gen 20:11).*



## 2. Finance

According to EJC's report on government regulations, tithes and general offerings should be used to pay for the ministers' living allowance. We observed that their offering was insufficient to pay for the ministers' living expenses. We figured there must be some members who help them out in secret.

Other than Banyanga, Baraka, and Zaire, other ministers have their own properties or occupation. A special offering would be established for any special church task. For instance, each church brought their special offering and food to attend this service.

During this trip, the only time we were asked for money was when we first arrived on August 5. They asked if we could voluntarily help with some food expenses. (In retrospect, they probably wanted to buy meat for us but it was too expensive and unaffordable.) Whether in their letters in the past year or during our stay, the EJC never made any financial demands.

Before we went to Congo, we had written and asked them, "Are you contacting us with financial expectations or purely for the truth?" They replied, "Purely for the truth!" At our first meeting, the first thing I said to them was, "I have neither silver nor gold, but what I have I will give you!" (cf. Acts 3:6) On the first day, Banyanga told the congregation of 200 with a loud voice, "We do not want silver or gold. We only hope that our guests bring us the truth!" The congregation shouted, "Amen!"

At first, I doubted their motives for contacting us. I thought they do not sincerely pursue the truth, do not fear God, and only wish for financial assistance! I was really disappointed at and ashamed of myself for mistrusting them!

After staying with them for more than 10 days, we witnessed that they are better than us in their simplicity and unswerving determination. I could almost feel what Abraham felt; I thought the people here do not fear God (cf. Gen 20:11).

## 3. Service

After nearly two weeks of being together, I discovered that EJC workers possess the qualities of our early TJC workers: their great faith in God, their longing for the gospel, their ready acceptance of the truth, their ability

to ask relevant questions and explain the truth more clearly, their demand on themselves, their frequent fasting prayers, their endurance of hardships, their initiative to offer first during the two services we had with them, and so much more.

### III. SUMMARY OF MAJOR EVENTS BEFORE AND AFTER THE PIONEERING TRIP

#### A. Before the Trip

- Around 2002, the IA IMP forwarded emails from the EJC and we began communication with them.
- After more than a year of communicating through email, we decided in May, 2004 to visit the EJC in Goma, Congo. With the help of the EJC, we planned our work and itineraries. We repeatedly declared, “I have neither silver nor gold, but only the truth.”
- At the end of June, while working in Benin, Africa, we learned that Bukavu, which is over 100 kilometers from Goma, had been occupied by rebel forces. The border between Rwanda and Goma was closed for a week.
- On July 16, volcano Nyamulagira, which is 40 kilometers from Goma, erupted, causing panic among residents.
- On July 20, residents in Goma heard rumors of war and began to evacuate from the city.
- On July 21, the EJC wrote about the turmoil in the city of Goma, but hoped that the meeting plan would not change. We responded that if we could not enter Goma, the EJC could send representatives to meet us at Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, to discuss the truth.
- On July 29 (Thursday), Bro. Gin-Jia Zhang and I departed from Paris, France to transit at Johannesburg, South Africa. We had services and visited members until August 3.
- Bro. Gin-Jia had been seriously ill for several days and I myself was burdened with ailments as well. Miraculously, both of us were healed that night!

#### B. The Beginning of the Journey

- On August 4 (Wednesday), 2004, at 1:30pm, we arrived at Kigali. Banyanga, the Chair of the EJC, Baraka, the National Overseer, and Elder Blaise came to receive us. Since they were late to arrive at the border between the two countries by 6pm, they stayed overnight at Kigali. With the movement of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Lord Jesus Christ, we had a crucial discussion over dinner with these three ministers regarding baptism.
- On August 5 (Thursday), we rode on a 15-passenger vehicle and began our slow journey along well-known mountainous roads of Rwanda. After four hours and over 100 kilometers, we arrived at Goma, Congo. There were about 200 members from 9 churches who gathered in one place to welcome us and listen to the truth. The EJC has great warmth and love.

- On August 6 (Friday) morning, 18 EJC holy workers came to our hotel to discuss the truth. The EJC coworkers had long thoughts about the issue of “bowing one’s head” during baptism. When we explained to the congregation that “infants must be baptized too,” the EJC workers were shocked.
- On August 7 (Sabbath morning), the three ministers who went to Kigali to receive us came to the hotel and expressed their determination to receive baptism again. In our first prayer together, all three received the Holy Spirit. We decided to baptize them on the 10th.
- On August 8 (Sunday), about 20 people rode in one vehicle and visited Rubaya, which is 70 kilometers from Goma. At a grazing ground, we encouraged more than 200 members to be like David who fought against Goliath, to be out of their mind in the eyes of worldly people for the sake of Christ, and to complete the impossible mission.
- On August 9 (Monday), we had our first prayer with the EJC workers. The Lord showed great visions and power. A great light shone and the fire of the Holy Spirit fell on each person’s head. Wearing white, the Lord stood next to the minister who was laying hands on the EJC workers to help and strengthen them. We also established a directory of members from each church who registered for baptism.
- On August 10 (Tuesday), 154 people from 9 churches were baptized in Goma. After baptism, we sent the congregation home and had holy workers stay for a seminar the next day.

### C. Workers' Seminar

- On August 11 (Wednesday), the congregation went home. The first day of the Workers' Seminar lasted from 9 am to 4:30 pm. We discussed issues such as the qualifications of the workers of the true church, the Sabbath, the change of church name from EJC to Véritable-Jésus-Église (VJC; the French equivalent of True Jesus Church), church registration, and translation of publications about the basic beliefs, etc.
- On August 12 (Thursday), which was the second day of the Workers' Seminar, we discussed church organization, baptism, footwashing, Holy Communion, and the doctrine of one True Church. We asked the participants repeatedly to practice conducting the sacraments. However, we instructed them not to perform any actual sacraments and not to lay hands on anyone.
- We found out that many members had to walk 15-44 kilometers of mountainous roads to attend this service! After these members returned to their respective churches, they actively preached to other members. Since many members requested baptism, we decided to hold another baptism on August 14.
- On August 13 (Friday), which was the third day of the seminar, we reviewed the basic beliefs and discussed the Holy Spirit. We declined to subsidize the 15 USD transportation fare for 30 members who would be coming for baptism the following day. We hoped that the ministry would continue to grow in our absence. I couldn't sleep the entire night but I was comforted by the thought that the Lord was walking before me in this ministry.



### D. The Second Baptism

- On August 14 (Sabbath), we baptized 106 believers at Sake Church. In total we baptized a total of 260 believers in these two baptisms. Among them were 48 holy workers from 10 churches: 10 preachers, 8 evangelists, 15 deacons, 11 deaconesses, 1 elder, 1 prophet and 2 apostles. Almost all of the important workers of the EJC have converted to the truth and become a spirited army of God!
- On August 15 (Sunday), we reminded the coworkers at Goma to take care of church registration, translation, evangelism, praying for the Holy Spirit, etc. in our absence. We arrived at Kigali in the evening and stayed there overnight.
- Recounting God's grace over more than ten days, we realized deeply that we were just unworthy and useless servants. May all glory be to the God in heaven, our Savior Jesus Christ! Amen!

### E. Swahili and Our English and French Ministries in Africa

- On the morning of August 16, we departed from Kigali and spent 6 hours to transit at Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. After we went through customs, we stayed with Sis. Emma, the secretary of the Kenya Evangelical Center in Nairobi. We discussed the task of translating church beliefs into Swahili. According to Sis. Emma, members in Kenya attempted the translation. But there were not many members fluent in Swahili, so progress had been slow. We then arrived at the Johannesburg Church in South Africa and had a family service.
- On August 17, the sicknesses that Bro. Gin-Jia and I were healed of before the trip recurred! Bro. Gin-Jia was so sick that he could not eat. Thank God that during the trip, He gave us sufficient health. We left South Africa at midnight and arrived in France on the morning of the 18. On August 22, I flew to London.
- On August 23, there was a meeting in London about the Russian ministry.
- On August 23-25, I attended United Kingdom General Assembly (UKGA) Ministers' Cultivation Seminar. We shared our reflections and thoughts about the direction of the English and French ministries in Africa. We encouraged one another to pray for and help each other. We were joyful and bathed in the grace of the Lord.

### F. Common Beliefs was Translated and Church By-Laws Established

- By August 25, the workers at Goma, with amazing speed, emailed us both the church by-laws needed for government registration and the complete translation of the French *Common Beliefs* (Dogmes). Swahili is one of the five official languages used in Congo. It is also a language used in neighboring countries, including the English-speaking districts in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. We immediately laid out *Common Beliefs* into a small booklet. After reviewing the By-laws, we promptly sent it back and instructed them to use it immediately and register it with the government. Coworkers in UK were thankful and gave praises to God when they saw the translation of *Common Beliefs*. They will use the translation for their trip to Kenya in the beginning of September.

### G. Goma was Occupied By the Rebel Forces.

- On August 27, I read an online report, dated the day before, by the French paper, Le Monde. Rebel forces had occupied Goma. There was a deathly stillness; only the armies were coming and going on the streets. We wrote a letter to the members in Goma to comfort them. Please pray for them.
- August 27-30. After reading the report on the 27th, Dn. Luke Chen and I flew to Dublin, Ireland to assist the ministry and visit members. Since I could not get online, I could not receive any news about Goma. I was very concerned. On several occasions, I told Dn. Chen that, whether during the night or early in the morning, I absent-mindedly thought I was still working in Africa. I could not forget the Lord's grace in Goma and the faithfulness and diligence of the newly baptized coworkers in that difficult environment.



*Whether during the night or early in the morning, I absent-mindedly thought I was still working in Africa. I could not forget the Lord's grace in Goma and the faithfulness and diligence of the newly baptized coworkers in that difficult environment.*

#### **H. Printed *Common Beliefs*, Completed Church Registration, Final Stages of Translating *Essential Doctrines***

- On August 31, I returned from Dublin to Dn. Luke's house in Leicester. Banyanga wrote to report safety and that *Common Beliefs* had been printed and was being used. Banyanga and Baraka have also been preaching the truth to other EJC members who hope to be baptized the next time.
- On September 8, we received registration documents from Banyanga, dated September 2, of the Congo Church. Since the translation of *Essential Doctrines* was almost complete, we had to find printing estimates quickly to decide whether to print it in or outside of Congo. (Every chapter would be printed as a stand-alone volume for convenience and cost savings.) Praise the Lord!
- In addition, Banyanga also requested intercession because opponents of the truth began to disturb the church. Nevertheless, our coworkers firmly believe that the truth will be triumphant. We pray that the Lord will add strength upon strength, and grace upon grace.

#### **IV. REFLECTIONS**

During this missionary journey, the work of the Holy Spirit was shown with unexpected power and speed. As I worked, I noted the four stages of work through daily prayers:

- 1. "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name." During our preaching, we focused on discussing the truth so that everyone could understand the truth and turn back to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.**
- 2. "Your kingdom come." The objectives of the ministry were to pray for the Holy Spirit, to baptize and to establish the church.**
- 3. "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." By relying on the Lord in everything, we solidified the foundation of the truth, built upon previous successes, expanded the ministry, established structure and held seminars.**
- 4. "Give us this day our daily bread." We prayed that the Lord's grace would be with the newly baptized members so that they would have more than they needed to give to others.**

Goma is a city by the mountains. The uneven terrain posed a great challenge to me since I have difficulty breathing. Before this trip, I prayed to the Lord to give me a "workable" body, which He granted my request. Because of my shortness of breath while climbing hills, a coworker in Goma suggested carrying me on his back. I refused, taking each step in God's grace to complete the path I needed to travel and the work I needed to do.

Unfortunately, outsiders will have difficulty accessing this place and other potential places to spread God's word because of the chaos caused by war and the remoteness of the region. Therefore, this ministry and the execution of sacraments must be entrusted to local, good, and faithful coworkers as soon as possible.

Other than some previous ambiguities about the truth of baptism (now that they have accepted the truth, they are just like us!), the coworkers at Goma are almost alter egos of our early church workers: full of faith, love of the truth, disciplined, finding repose in poverty and delight in wisdom, willing to sacrifice and offer, and diligent!

I thought to myself, if one day these co-workers were to come to "our" place and see the church in spiritual lethargy amidst God's abundant material blessings, would they cry out aloud?

Ananias received the truth before Paul did and baptized him in the name of the Lord Jesus. But Paul turned out to be a more precious vessel and had a deeper understanding of the truth than Ananias did. If we pray and hope that the church will become perfect over time, we must recognize and accept that our successors will be better than us.

Only then can the promise of "the glory of the latter shall be great than the former" be realized continually and in everyday of our work. We should also learn from the teachings and discipline of our successors and not grow accustomed to being teachers. If we always think that only other people need to be "trained," then we lose the opportunity to examine and improve ourselves.

During this trip, the former EJC spent much of its savings sponsoring such a big event. They did not make any material requests before and after baptism. After baptism, they immediately threw themselves into the ministry of the "true church" (translating publications and evangelizing in former EJC places of worship).

We turned a blind eye to their poverty and did not make any promise to provide material support and subsidies. I did not even give one of the hundred-something M&M's I had with me. I was tortured by such "cruelty."

After personally experiencing the mighty and constant power of the Holy Spirit, I was filled with astonishment, excitement, and thanksgiving. But what followed was the unforgettable feeling of unworthiness.

On the last day, I walked through the customs, which was closed one month earlier because of the war. After having my passport stamped by the authorities in Congo and Rwanda, I felt as if I were in a dream. I did not believe so much can happen within 10 days. Looking back at Goma, amidst the dust kicked up by the car, I was filled with gratitude and longing. We plan to make another trip to Goma in January 2005, when Bro. Gin-Jia can take his winter vacation leave.

*Oh! Goma, may the Lord guide your coming and going. We will return quickly! ★*



# Arrows In A Father's Hand

Richard Solgot—Tampa, Florida, USA

## THE WARRIOR FATHER

*Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but shall speak with their enemies in the gate. (Ps 127:3-5)*

These verses speak to family life and in particular to the significant role of the father. Many analogies are given for fathers throughout life, literature, and the scriptures. The word picture painted for us in this psalm is of the father as a warrior who holds his arrows in his strong hand.

My father was a very good archer. He was known for his ability to pin a running rabbit to the ground with his bow and

arrow. I can see him now carefully placing the arrow onto the bow and pulling back the string of that fifty-five pound pull recurve bow. His aim seldom wandered, and with a plunk of the string the arrow was flung with great speed toward the intended target. He was a very skillful archer.

The Psalmist speaks of children as being arrows in the father's hand. The picture is the father carefully and skillfully guiding his children toward an intended target, like the warrior would his arrow. Using this analogy let us as fathers find instruction, as well as encouragement to guide and direct the lives of our children.

## SKILLED AND STRONG

I can remember as a young boy amazed at the strength of my father being able to pull back the string of his bow. He would

often let me try, but at that time I did not have the strength.

The warrior father must be skilled and strong to shoot arrows straight. Arrows are no more effective than the archer. And the bow is not better than the warrior who holds it.

*Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present your self approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2Tim 2:14-15)*

Many times, the captured audience of a father's words is the listening ears of his children. We may say our children have the uncanny ability of selected hearing (and they usually get it from us



**The question of the hour is not, “What will my children be?”  
But it is “What do I want my children to be like?”**

Dads!), but we might be amazed at just how much they hear and learn from our lips.

The Christian father who wants his children to follow in his footsteps needs to be skilled at handling God’s word. I believe that, if God’s word is strong in the hands of the father, it has a greater chance of being strong in the life of his children.

The power of the warrior has far more to do with where the arrow goes than does the arrow.

Where is your strength found in guiding your children? As a father you must not only be skilled at handling God’s word but also strong to walk in the ways of God.

If you want your children to go the distance in the Christian life, then skill yourself in God’s word, and find your strength in the spirit of the Lord:

*So he answered and said to me: “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ Says the LORD of hosts.” (Zech 4:6)*

## SHAPES AND SHARPENS

Today, arrows are made from an assortment of materials such as wood, fiberglass and metal. Regardless of the material used, the one consistent characteristic of arrows is that they are to be straight. Each arrow must be shaped and fashioned in order to be straight.

“As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children” (1 Thess 2:11). Children come in an assortment of shapes, sizes, and bents in life. But they do not come out as arrows ready to be placed upon the bow and shot.

They must be disciplined (shaped) and instructed (sharpened) in the teachings of the Lord. “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord” (Eph 6:4).

Listen to this story of shaping and sharpening of a father with his sons.

I will never forget one opening day of the pheasant hunt. Dad, my older brother, and I were up at 4:00 a.m. We ate a big, hearty breakfast, packed the car, and drove to our designated field by 6:00 a.m. We arrived early to stake out our spot before any others, anticipating the 8:00 a.m. opening hour.

As that hour drew near, other hunters were frantically driving around us, trying to find spots in which to hunt. As 7:40 arrived, we saw hunters driving into the fields. By 7:45 the firing had started—fifteen minutes before the official start. We looked at Dad.

He made no move except to look at his watch; still waiting for 8:00 a.m. Soon the birds were flying. By 7:50 all hunters had moved into the fields, and shots were heard everywhere.

Dad looked at his watch and said,

“The hunt starts at eight o’clock, boys.” About three minutes before eight, four hunters drove into our spot and walked past us into our field. We looked at Dad.

He said, “The hunt starts for us at eight.” At eight the birds were gone, but we started our drive into the field. We didn’t get any birds that day, but we received an education in absolute integrity. Here’s the point.

Dads, your children are going to act like you in many ways. The question of the hour is not, “What will my children be?” But it is “What do I want my children to be like?”

As Paul says, exhort, comfort, and challenge your children, and build godly character in them by setting limits in their lives (1 Sam 3:13), as well as having fun with them. One man has put it best by stating fathers need to be “Firm, Fair, and Fun.”

As a father warrior, shape and sharpen your children by modeling God’s truth in your life. Let them see in you what they are intended to be when grown up.

## SEEING AND SIZING

It was not an uncommon site in rural Michigan to see several bales of hay stacked together with a target fixed to them. The archer at whatever distance he is shooting from must see and size up his target.

If children are nothing more than a biological happening, we have arrows without a target. Let’s face the truth—many fathers see their children as such and put forth no effort to see that their children hit an intended target.

It is understood that we all have dreams, hopes, and aspirations of what we would like for our kids to become. You know—doctors, lawyers, and iron

chefs. But as Christian fathers, do we have God-given goals and targets in mind for these arrows in our hands?

Eighteen times in the NKJV Bible, the apostle John uses the term “children” in 1-2-3 John. And the intended target he desired for his spiritual children is found in 3 John 4: “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”

We may have goals of wealth, health, and happiness in mind for our children. And who doesn’t! But what are the goals we want our children to hit in life? Are they sized up in the truth of God’s word? Do we want to shoot arrows in the air? Or do we, as fathers, have the target of Jesus Christ, the intimate and ultimate truth of God’s word, in sight for our children?

## SHOOTING AND SENDING

I have talked to bow hunters whose skill level in hitting the target is excellent, who could not release the arrow when it came to the moment of truth in the woods staring at that trophy prize. One man said regretfully, “I just could not let go of the arrow.”

Proverbs 17:6 says, “Children’s children are the crown of old men, And the glory of children is their father.” Children grow up and the day will come when they, like the arrows, must be released and sent out away from the warrior. It should be our aim to send our children out with the godly skills and desires to emotionally leave home and handle life on their own.

And so it is today that I must be skilled and strong in the use of God’s word to shape and sharpen his life. I must see and size up the goal so that when the day comes for him to leave I can pull the bow back with confidence



**Do we want to shoot arrows in the air? Or do we, as fathers, have the target of Jesus Christ, the intimate and ultimate truth of God’s word, in sight for our children?**

and allow the arrow to be flung toward that intended target of Jesus Christ.

Psalms 127:3-4 says, “Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one’s youth.”

Your children and my children are our heritage, for they walk after us. Let us not think of heritage in terms of when we are gone, but let us live their heritage before them this day and all the tomorrows to come. ★

# Mastering Our Surfing Habits



## “THE WORLD IS YOUR OYSTER”

The Internet: the world’s greatest source of information and entertainment.

Indeed, the moment we are connected, the “world is [our] oyster.” The advancement of the Internet has enabled us to chat with someone thousands of miles away, take part in a cyber auction, download the latest software or movie, read up on current affairs, book a flight, and even order a pizza! The list is almost infinite.

Just type a word in a search engine and you will have an endless list of the closest matches. Download a program and you can immediately chat with someone, sign up to this and that, receive offers and discounts, play games, get updates and e-mails, and so on.

It’s fun. It’s satisfying. It’s addictive.

Since it’s so enjoyable, we begin to get pleasure out of it. We realize it makes us feel good, so going online becomes second nature to us. We could say it

becomes a habit.

The definition of a habit is “a settled way of behaving; something done frequently and almost without thinking; something that is hard to give up.”

The latter part of the quote may be applicable to most of us. We may find the Internet hard to give up because it has become integrated with our everyday lives. And if our need to use the Internet develops good habits that keep our lives in order, there is nothing wrong with that.

But the question is when does using the Internet become a bad habit?

## FROM HABIT TO PROBLEM

I’ve never owned a personal computer or laptop, but it was still possible for me to access the Internet at most times of the day. In hindsight, I suppose having only one computer in the house was beneficial for me and my siblings.

Having one computer would also

mean having to compete with my siblings. The fact that the computer was situated in my mom’s room should have given me more self-control and discipline. Most times it did; other times it didn’t.

When we first connected to the Internet, it was like Alice in Wonderland! Click on this and that and you begin to explore another avenue. Type in the keyword and the magic begins! Sign up here and the curiosity deepens. What was a simple exploration became habitual surfing.

At what point does our habit of using the Internet become a problem? You may casually think to yourself, “I don’t spend that much time on the internet. Why should this question affect me?” From my experience, the point when I realized I had crossed the fine line between a mere habit and a serious problem was when I was able to type without having to look at my hands.

This wasn't a result of attending typing classes or doing so many assignments during my university years but more to do with the time I had spent chatting with friends via the Internet. If I were to total up the amount of time spent on the Internet versus the amount of time praying and reading the Bible, it wouldn't take much brain power to know the answer to this equation.

It became a problem once it started to interfere with my body clock, family time, studies, and, most importantly, my relationship with God. For others, it got out of control when they found themselves sleeping during the first Sabbath service, after a marathon of online games and futile chatting the night before.

Signs like these are a good indication to us to change the way we use the Internet.

As James 1:14 states, "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed." Before you know it, your habit masters you, not you mastering your habit. As Peter teaches us: "For a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him" (2 Pet 2:19, NIV).

So what can we do when we come to the realization of such a habit?

## WEIGH IN OUR BAD HABITS

When we recognize that we have bad habits, we need to take a good hard look at our situation.

We can use a pair of weighing scales as an analogy to illustrate this point. When we have too many bad habits, they will outweigh the good ones and cause an unequal balance. In order to have more good habits you need less of the bad.

Some people might have the

misconception that, by adding good habits to the bad, the scale will balance out. Having a balanced scale is not always the most effective solution; especially when it comes to the way we live our Christian lives. And it doesn't resolve our problems if our bad habits still linger with us.

Sooner or later, they will seep their way back into our lives. The only way to do this is to remove the bad habits completely to give more weight to the good ones.

If, whenever we notice bad habits, we just try to balance it out with good ones, the entire scale actually gets heavier; our inner self will eventually become even more burdened by the contradictory way in which we live our lives—having good habits yet cyclically succumbing to the bad habits because we did not get rid of them.

The problem with such a scale is that we did not remove the bad habits; rather, we compromised with them. For example, you may use the Internet for educational or academic purposes, but if you continue to engage in long-hour chats and video games, the bad habit remains.

The key is to remove the bad habits and not compromise with them. Let the good habits take root and develop them. And when the good habits outweigh the bad ones, our inner self will get stronger at facing the temptations of this world. The stronger and more steadfast we are,

the less likely the bad habits will tip the scale.

Bad habits are easier to follow than good ones and it is difficult to break bad habits, but it doesn't mean it's impossible. Even Paul had this inner struggle.

*But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. (Rom 7:17-18)*

This is not to suggest that the use of the Internet is a sin. But there is a chance for our bad habits to turn into a sin. Once our bad habits interfere with our time with God and our relationship with other people, we will need to weigh our habits and think, "What is it that compels us to find more interest with the Internet rather than with God?"

We need to acknowledge that we have this weakness. If we cannot be honest with ourselves, can we examine ourselves effectively with a sincere heart? By adding good habits to balance out the bad, this shows that we are not honest with ourselves to really break the bad ones.

Being honest with ourselves and examining our actions is the first step. The second step is to break the Internet wave.

## BREAK THE WAVE

If you find yourself reaching for your computer mouse to click on the Internet icon again, ask yourself, "Is there something I can do that is more productive and worthwhile?" What are some of the practical solutions to control our habit of using the Internet too much?



**The problem with such a scale is that we did not remove the bad habits; rather, we compromised with them.**

- **Remove the cause of the problem.** This doesn't mean to disconnect the Internet from every computer or laptop in your household. If there are more than a few computers or laptops, one suggestion is to have only one computer connected. Place the computer in a public room. For those who take their laptop to-and-from work, is it essential to bring it home?
- **Occupy yourself.** Take up an unusual hobby. If you find your fingers itching take up an activity that will keep them busy. Maybe you'll want to explore something you've always wanted to learn: arts and crafts, pottery, journal writing, or anything that doesn't require a computer.
- **Set a time.** Set a time when you can use the Internet and stick to a certain time limit. This will exercise your self-control and will become part of your routine rather than an addictive bad habit.
- **Exercise.** Take up a sport or go for a brisk walk. Exercise can be very empowering and satisfying, and it is good for your body, mind and soul.
- **Make a concerted effort with fellow surfers.** Sometimes, it is very difficult to stay away from the Internet if all our friends continue with the bad habit while we are the only one making the effort. This is really the time that we can help each other improve ourselves. Make a pact with fellow brothers and sisters to break the wave. Encourage and support one another to spend our time on healthier activities.
- **Prioritize.** Organize your life so you

know which things are more important. Place God in the centre of your life rather than revolve your life around the Internet. I still like to chat with friends online, but I've managed to do this in a more effective and conventional method. Writing letters by hand prove to be more meaningful and personal. Even though you don't receive an instant reply, you have a chance to express your true character rather than chat impulsively without much thought. Though owning a computer is essential to our studies, I've managed not to own one and just use the university's facilities or share the computer at home. It is a struggle, but it has improved my organization skills and punctuality, and it has helped me keep my time on the Internet to as brief as possible.

### SPIRITUAL DIAL-UP

Paul makes a very good point in 1 Corinthians 6:12: "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."

In other words, we have everything available within our reach but not all things are beneficial. It's like seeing a huge dinner table with many different types of delicious foods. We can choose to eat anything from that table but not everything is healthy.

It's good to treat yourself to a chocolate cake but do you seriously want more chocolate cake knowing it just expands your waistline and will never feed your cravings?

He also reminds us, "Set your minds on things above, not on things in the earth" (Col 3:2). If we can place our mind and thoughts on things that really matter, the things of the world will not matter so

much.

We, as children of God, have been given the Holy Spirit to aid us and guide us. We have such a wonderful gift that we can distinguish right and wrong; a good habit from a bad one. We will know how to use the Internet moderately rather than excessively.

Break the habit that hinders us from spending time with God. If we can set our minds on Him, He will surely help us overcome our shortcomings.

Living in a constantly changing society is not easy. We become exposed to new technological advances, and the application of the Internet is vast and wide. It will bring us more temptations and desires, and we can be enticed by them.

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom 12:2).

One of the key words is "renewing." We need to give ourselves a constant spiritual refill of the Holy Spirit. The only way to do this is by constant self-examination. Through constant self-examination and spiritual cultivation, we are able to realize that there is more to our lives than the Internet. We will be able to step away from the edge of temptation and step out of our bad habits.

Only then we can truly say, "I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Cor 6:12). ★

# Hardly Worth A *glance*

Samuel Kuo—Hillsborough, New Jersey, USA

On top of the list read “DEAD DOG.”

But I completely forgot why I wrote it down.

When I recently moved, one of the first things I bought was a small, personal whiteboard. I planned on using it by jotting down the things I needed to buy, errands to run, or required engagements to attend.

While it was used as originally intended, I found myself also forming a column of terse, spiritually related statements on the right-hand side of the whiteboard. They were words that struck me when reading the Bible and profound ideas that were discussed during Bible studies.

Essentially they were expressions that made me think of particularities—all of which served as reminders of areas where I needed to improve in my faith. The items were personal and specifically for myself, so they never exceeded two or three words: “1 Peter 5:10,” “Obey > Sacrifice,” “Know = Serve+,” “Heart, Soul, Strength,” “Luke 7:41-42.”

This was just part of the list.

On one particular morning, on top of the list read “Dead Dog.” And I had completely forgotten why I had written it down.

It became really bothersome until hours later it finally occurred to me that I had written two words—two words from Bible study a week earlier—recorded in 2 Samuel 9:8: “Then he bowed himself, and said, ‘What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?’” They are the words of Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, who was lame in both

feet. How easily I forget.

Evidently, after King Saul’s death in a battle with the Amalekites, there was a power struggle within the kingdom of Israel. One of Saul’s sons, Ishbosheth, was appointed King of Israel, while David was appointed king of Judah.

Though not intended by David, the days and years that ensued resulted in the near annihilation of King Saul’s descendants and his loyalists including Ishbosheth and Abner, save Mephibosheth (cf. 2 Samuel 2-4).

Following his ascension to the throne, King David sought to show kindness to anyone left in Saul’s house for Jonathan’s sake (2 Sam 9:1). This resulted in a tremendously loving gesture to Mephibosheth: King David restored to him all the land of his grandfather, King Saul, and appointed him to eat at his table continually.

Fittingly, in complete humility, Mephibosheth replied, “What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?” (2 Sam 9:8).

In truth, we are not much different than Mephibosheth. Spiritually lame, there is little we can do to return the indescribable favor God shows us. Deserving no mercy, we are shown mercy—having part in a glorious kingdom we have no right to inherit in the first place. Merely worthless sinners, we enjoy the blessings that God bestows at His table day by day.

In reality, we are dead dogs, hardly worth a glance, barely worth the gag.

Even though we know these things, all too often, what happened to me happens to all of us—we forget. We forget

our true nature before a holy and pure God. We forget what we enjoy now is all due to God’s grace and, simply, that. Grace.

We forget that we are undeserving of this kindness, totally unworthy of His grace. However, He showed us love. Our status as His children, the blessings we enjoy, the promises we trust in, the hope that preserves us—all stem from the grace shown by a singular event—that a holy and loving God would die for the sake of sinners like us (Rom 5:8).

Those who forget their sinful origin and the grace that covered it eventually lose compassion, forgiveness, and love. Instead, they gain more coldness, complaints, and self-righteousness—even reverting to their sinful origins.

Those who constantly remember their sinful origin and the grace that covered it eventually do great things for God, winning more and repaying grace with a sincere gratitude. Think Peter<sup>1</sup>. Think Paul<sup>2</sup>.

I have forgotten. Will I choose to remember?

*“What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered  
was all for sinners’ gain:  
Mine, mine was the transgression,  
But Thine the deadly pain.  
Lo, here I fall, my Savior! Tis I  
deserve Thy place.  
Look on me with Thy favor,  
Vouchsafe to me thy grace.”*

—Bernard of Clairvaux

<sup>1</sup>(cf. Mt 26:69-75, Acts 2:5, 10)

<sup>2</sup>(cf. 1 Tim 1:15, 2 Cor 5:13-15)



Manna is looking for certain types of articles, or article genres. Each genre constitutes a different subject matter and writing approach. If you are planning to write an article (regardless of topic), please try to adhere to one of the genres below.

### **Christian Living**

A *Christian Living* article gives practical biblical guidance on real-life issues and how to use Jesus' teachings in our daily lives. Article length: 1500-2000 words.

### **Bible Study**

A *Bible Study* explores a passage or character from the Bible and draws out the teachings for readers to apply to their lives. Article length: 2000 words.

### **Doctrinal Study**

A *Doctrinal Study* examines an aspect of True Jesus Church beliefs and may present it in comparison to other beliefs. Article length: 2000 words.

### **Exhortation**

An *Exhortation* encourages and admonishes the reader in different aspects of the Christian faith. Article length: 1500-2000 words.

### **Testimony**

A *Testimony* recounts an experience in the Lord that will encourage and edify the reader. Article length: 1000-1500 words.

### **Creative Writing**

*Creative Writing* pieces include poems, parables, or short stories that illustrate a biblical teaching or idea. Keep in mind as you're writing: how will this edify the reader?

#### **SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

Please email electronic files of articles (Word, Wordperfect, ASCII text) to [manna@tjc.org](mailto:manna@tjc.org), or send hardcopy and disk to:

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**General Assembly of True Jesus Church**  
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**Anaheim, CA 92804 USA**

Please direct any questions to [manna@tjc.org](mailto:manna@tjc.org) or  
Phone: +1-714-533-8808  
Fax: +1-714-533-8878

In your submission, please include your name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number even if you wish to remain anonymous.

# Call For Articles

## *Author Guidelines & Editorial Calendar*

### **Issue #48**

#### **Theme: The Body of Christ**

**Articles due: February 28, 2005**

How do we as members function in the body of Christ, and how do we respect each other's roles? What does the Bible teach us about unity in the body, and how does this affect our salvation?

### **Issue #49**

#### **Theme: The Family Altar**

**Articles due: May 31, 2005**

What is the importance of building a family altar in our own homes? What does the Bible teach about raising godly children? What are some practical ways in which we can draw closer together as a family unit?

### **Issue #50**

#### **Theme: The One True Church**

**Articles due: Aug 31, 2005**

What does the Bible say about the manifestations of the one true church? How do we know we are the true church? And what steps must we take to build up this church as we wait for the second coming?

*In your submission, please include your name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number*

## **GENERAL WRITING GUIDELINES**

### **CONTENT**

- Content should be biblically sound and adhere to biblical principles.
- Article should be organized and have a logical flow of thought.
- The main point or teaching of the article should be clear to the reader.
- Readers should be able to apply what they have read to their daily lives.

### **GRAMMAR/STYLE**

- Use active instead of passive voice.
- Write concisely.
- Use concrete words and ideas instead of abstract concepts.
- Use "plain old English" instead of obscure, academic language.
- Use the NKJV version when quoting Bible verses.
- Use American spelling, if possible.
- Adhere to the IA Style Guide, except for He/Him when referring to God/Jesus.

# True Jesus Church

## Articles of Faith

### Jesus the True God

The One True God was manifested in the flesh. He is the Lord Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for the redemption of sinners, was resurrected on the third day, and ascended to heaven. He is the only Savior of mankind, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and the only True God.

### Holy Bible

The Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible are inspired by God and are therefore the only authentic scriptures which testify to the Truth.

### Church

The True Jesus Church was established by our Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit (the Latter Rain) and is the revival of the True Church of the Apostolic Days.

### Salvation

Salvation is given by grace through faith. However, it is necessary to rely on the Holy Spirit to pursue holiness and to keep the biblical teachings of honoring God and loving humanity.

### Baptism

The Baptism of Water is the sacrament for the remission of sins and for regeneration. The baptist must already have received baptisms of water and the Holy Spirit. The baptism must be immersion in natural, living water and must be administered in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, with the candidate's head facing downward.

### Foot Washing

The Washing of Feet is a sacrament which enables one to have a part in the Lord and teaches mutual love, holiness, humility, service, and forgiveness. The sacrament of the washing of feet must be performed in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ to all newly baptized members. Mutual washing of feet may be practiced when necessary.

### Holy Spirit

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a prerequisite for entering heaven; speaking in tongues is the evidence of having received the Holy Spirit.

### Holy Communion

The Holy Communion is the sacrament to commemorate the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. It enables us to partake of the flesh and blood of our Lord and to be in communion with Him so that we may have eternal life and be raised on the last day. This sacrament should be held as often as possible. Only one unleavened bread and grape juice should be used.

### Sabbath Day

The Sabbath Day, the seventh day of the week (Saturday), is a holy day, blessed and sanctified by God. It is to be observed under the Lord's grace for the commemoration of God's creation and redemption and with the hope of eternal rest.

### Judgment Day

The Lord Jesus Christ will descend from heaven on the Last Day to judge all people; the righteous will receive eternal life, while the wicked will be eternally condemned.

## TRUE JESUS CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

For additional information on the True Jesus Church, contact us or visit us on our website. We look forward to hearing from you!

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