

The History of True Jesus Church (II)

Passages: Acts 13:47; Rom 8:11; Zech 4:6; Eph 6:8; Col 1:9; Eph 1:15–17; Col 3:2; Mt 6:19–21; 2 Tim 4:10; Acts 15:37–39; Gal 6:9; Acts 14:15

Memory Verse

“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.” (2 Timothy 4:2)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Work [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the gospel spread to numerous countries beyond China.2. The Holy Spirit will perfect the true church.	God is truth, and He guides His believers into all truth.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Rely on the Holy Spirit to help us preach and develop the church.2. To become a worker for God, set our minds on things above, maintain a spirit of persistence, and keep a humble heart.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. West Malaysia, Sabah (1927)
- B. Indonesia (1941)
- C. Japan (1946)
- D. South Korea (1948)
- E. United Kingdom (1972)
- F. France (1983)
- G. Germany (1985)
- H. Africa

Life Application

1. Relying on the Holy Spirit
2. Whom Does God Use in His Work?
3. Establishing God’s Church in a Foreign Land

Memory Verse

Conclusion: We need to continue the work of developing the true church by building up and relying upon the Holy Spirit within us. When we set our minds on things above, maintain a spirit of persistence, and keep a humble heart, our work for Him will bear fruit with His blessing.

Spiritual Teachings

Introduction

(Teachers: You may want to prepare a map as supplementary material for this lesson, such as a world map poster, Google Maps, or an atlas. This will help your students visualize the spread of our churches within a global context. Manna Magazine Issue #84¹ has a helpful world chart that you may also refer to; it also includes countries not included in the scope of this lesson.)

See Figures 1 and 2 for a basic timeline of our church establishments within the context of world history. Note that the timeline only includes churches that are covered in these lessons.)

God commanded us to preach the truth to the ends of the earth as early as Old Testament times. The Acts of the Apostles quotes Isaiah 49:6, saying, "For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth' " (Acts 13:47). For the apostles, the "ends of the earth" was Europe, and Paul obeyed the word of God by traveling all the way to Spain to preach. But where are the "ends of the earth" for us today?

Last week, we learned about how the gospel spread to Taiwan and, from there, to Singapore. These two were only the beginning. Over the past fifty years, the True Jesus Church has spread to every continent in the world. But we can hardly cover the history of the church in every single country in one lesson! Instead, we will focus on the four general periods of church expansion into the following territories, in chronological order:

1. East Asia (Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong)
2. Southeast Asia (Malaysia, Indonesia)
3. Europe (U.K., France, Germany)
4. Africa (Nigeria, Liberia, Ghana)

(Teachers: Note that the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand will be covered in Lesson 5. Since each lesson is organized by time and region, some countries will inevitably be omitted. For supplementary material, you may choose to look up additional information on specific churches. Testimonies of some church histories can be found online at www.tjc.org. The website also includes contact information for regional churches.)

A. West Malaysia, Sabah (1927)

The gospel spread from Singapore to Sabah through literary evangelism. One brother, deeply moved by the copy of the Holy Spirit Times sent to him by a friend, traveled to Singapore to seek out the True Jesus Church there. He received the Holy Spirit three days after his baptism on January 11, 1927, and later brought others with him to preach the gospel in Sandakan, where the first True Jesus Church in Malaysia was established. During World War II (1941–45), the Japanese army occupied the entire region of Southeast Asia, forcing the believers to disperse and go into hiding when the situation worsened. Despite this, they kept their faith and continued family services. After the war, the believers gradually returned and resumed services. In 1952, the Sabah church was officially registered.

B. Indonesia (1941)

¹ Issue #84 can be found here: <http://ia.tjc.org/elibrary/ContentDetail.aspx?ItemID=36259&langid=1> or in the list of pdfs on <http://mannamagazine.com/pdfs/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

The history of our Indonesian church began when, after living in Indonesia for some time, one non-believer returned to his birthplace in Fujian. There, he contracted a serious illness and became an invalid for six months. His mother traveled from temple to temple to no avail, until finally his aunt visited and encouraged him to attend services at the True Jesus Church. He agreed and was carried to the church on a stretcher. He stayed for twenty-eight days, praying until the Lord showed mercy and healed him. He and his mother both were baptized, and towards the end of 1932, he returned to Mukasa (now Jung Pandang) in South Sulawesi, Indonesia.

While working in Jakarta, he eventually met with another brother, also originally from China, who offered his house as a place of worship for the twelve members already in Jakarta. A few months later, the two brothers rented a house with a front section for worship and a back section for the physically ill, to whom they evangelized. The members held a steadfast faith, truly believing that the Lord could heal the sick, and their membership steadily grew with God's guidance. In 1941, the first True Jesus Church in Indonesia was established, and by 1952, they received permission from the government to establish branch churches across the country.

Our Indonesian church is unique in that the Indonesian General Assembly opened a school in Jakarta in 1970. It was named the Kanaan Christian School and offered education to the general public, from kindergarten to high school. Today, there are about 3,000 students in the school's three branches. Its teachers and students are required to attend Sabbath services, and students receive two hours of religious education every week from the Indonesian General Assembly. As a result, many teachers, parents, and students have become fervent believers in Christ.

C. Japan (1946)

The first Japanese members came into contact while Taiwan was still a Japanese colony. It was in Taiwan that some of the first members, including one brother who was later ordained as a minister to preach to the Japanese people in Taiwan, came into contact with the truth. In 1941, five Japanese Pentecostal ministers traveled to Taiwan to observe our church and discuss doctrine. Two of them accepted the truth and brought the gospel back with them to Japan. There, they changed their Pentecostal church into the True Jesus Church, adopting the doctrine and sacraments of the true church, and re-baptizing their members in accordance with the truth.

Since educated Taiwanese were fluent in Japanese at the time, Taiwanese church workers were able to assist in the newly established Japanese churches. A theological seminar was held in Tokyo in 1942. Unfortunately, one brother who helped to bring the gospel to Japan left the truth, but the seminar led another truth-seeker to Taiwan in October 1942, where he baptized into the church and eventually became a preacher there. When Japan lost control over Taiwan, he was sent back to Japan, where he helped to establish churches in Nanjyou and Jyohe, and houses of prayer in Tokyo, Idare, Ueda, and Haken. Taiwan continued to communicate with and support the Japanese churches, despite the changing political situation. Finally, in October 1963, the Japanese General Assembly was formed.

D. South Korea (1948)

Like Taiwan, Koreans were educated in Japanese during the Japanese occupation, making it relatively easier to spread the seeds of the gospel from Japan to Korea. In July 1941, one truth-seeker visited the True Jesus Church in Japan. During his visit, he received the Holy Spirit and was baptized. Not long after, another Korean truth-seeker also received the gospel in Japan. In January 1945, he brought the truth back with him to South Korea, preaching to members of the Presbyterian church. Three years later, the

True Jesus Church was established in Korea, in August 1948. The two members preached all over Korea, establishing churches, and a year after the First National Delegates Conference in April 1950, the Korean General Assembly was formed.

E. United Kingdom (1972)

The first seeds of the True Jesus Church reached the United Kingdom in 1950, when Malaysian brethren began moving to the U.K. for study and work. Later, in the 1960s, a large influx of church members arrived from regions within Hong Kong, specifically the New Territories and Ap Chau. The newcomers were mostly single brothers seeking a better life through hard labor and meager wages. Isolated from each other and their families, they became sheep without a shepherd (Ezek 34:5–6). Their faith remained cold until 1972, when God led several workers from Taiwan and Malaysia to gather and encourage the members. As a result, service was held for the first time, and houses of prayer were established in Sunderland and Newcastle.

To assist with church development, thirteen members were ordained as deacons and deaconesses in Newcastle in 1975. In Edinburgh, the members rapidly increased in number from a mere twenty to over 200, while Newcastle reached over 400 people. Finally, under the guidance of God, the first True Jesus Church building in the U.K. was purchased in Newcastle and dedicated on July 12, 1976. More than seventy infants and adults were baptized on that joyous occasion. Edinburgh and Sunderland soon followed suit, dedicating new church buildings in May and July of 1979, respectively. Under God's grace and guidance, other churches throughout the country rapidly grew in membership, and up until the end of 1992, a total of seven churches and one house of prayer were established with a cumulative membership of 1,656.

F. France (1983)

The gospel of the True Jesus Church reached mainland Europe in 1977, when a deacon and two brothers began holding services together. Membership increased through immigration and conversion, and the prayer house was officially registered with the French Authority in 1983. The current Véritable Jésus Église building outside Paris was then purchased in 1992 and dedicated in 1994. Unlike our other churches in the western hemisphere, the Véritable Jésus Église in Paris decided early on to use French as the main sermon-delivery language. As a result, the church has been able to reach out to native French speakers. Today, 70% of the members are first generation church members. Paris church is also one of the most ethnically diverse of our churches in the west.

G. Germany (1985)

Family services began in Germany when two Taiwanese brothers arrived there in 1979. Membership slowly grew as brothers and sisters joined them from Taiwan. With the help of workers from the U.K., the first Spiritual Convocation on the European Continent was held in 1980. Afterwards, annual Spiritual Convocations in Heidelberg were held for the entire European Continent. Eventually, bi-annual Spiritual Convocations were also held exclusively for German-speaking areas.

Starting in 1982, services became more consistently held in a brother's rented room in Heidelberg. Membership increased through conversion, and the first baptism in Heidelberg was performed in 1984. In 1985, the house of prayer in Heidelberg was established and in 1987, registered under the name of Wahre Jesus Gemeinde. The location for their services changed several times, until they purchased an apartment in 1992, used solely for church purposes. From 1984 to 1991, members preached across various locations in Germany and developed three other service locations in the German-speaking areas

of Rhineland, Hamburg, and the combined areas of Salzburg and Vienna in Austria.

H. Africa

1. Nigeria (1978)

A member of the Mount Zion Church of Jesus Christ in Nigeria came into contact with the Taiwan General Assembly in 1976. Later, during a visit to the United States, he was baptized in the Kern River in Bakersfield, California, 1978. Upon returning to Nigeria, he introduced the truth to members of his old church. Some believed and were baptized. The following year, two True Jesus Church workers were invited to Africa to discuss the truth with board members of the Mount Zion Church. As a result, a second group of 322 people were baptized in 1979. God worked with them, and there were many miracles and wonders.

2. Liberia (1985)

In 1981, the International Assembly sent members to Liberia where they distributed pamphlets titled "Words of Life" during their transit at the airport. Two years later, during his flight to Liberia, one of our preachers met a businessman from Ghana. They discussed the truth, and the businessman was baptized three days later. The church sent workers to continue preaching in Liberia, and they eventually conducted a baptism at Buchanan. A church was later established in Liberia in 1985.

3. Ghana (1985)

After his baptism in Liberia, the same businessman returned to Ghana the same year and preached the truth to his friends, opening a way for the gospel. He preached the truth in his hometown in Port Harcourt, baptized new believers, and helped to establish the church there. In 1985, church workers went to preach in the capital city of Accra and other places in Ghana. They baptized about forty people and established another church.

Life Application

1. Relying on the Holy Spirit

We may find preaching to our friends a difficult task. How can I touch the hearts of my friends and family? How can I explain to them the importance of the gospel? No matter how we seek the answers to these questions, we must remember that it is the Spirit who gives life. Paul wrote, "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you" (Rom 8:11). Our own answers to these questions will fall short, but we can lead others to salvation "not by might nor by power, but by [His] Spirit" (Zech 4:6).

The mighty power of the Holy Spirit can be illustrated most clearly in His initial descent on the Day of Pentecost. Peter, who once denied Jesus three times, delivered a powerful sermon that led to around 3,000 newly baptized members, a far greater number than those who had ever followed Jesus during His time on earth. Centuries later, the Spirit returned in China and once again worked powerfully, building up the true church from the limited number of workers in the early church. But the power of the Spirit can only come about through prayer.

a. Praying for Ourselves

Learning to rely on the Spirit, especially when evangelizing, is a process. There will be moments when we are required to answer difficult questions. But that simply means we must study

Scripture all the more and pray daily for ourselves, so that we can build up our wisdom and knowledge of the Lord. Developing our strength in the Lord will feel like an uphill struggle at times, but Paul encourages us, writing that “whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord” (Eph 6:8). When we rely on the Spirit’s power to help us grow in our wisdom of Him and to do His good work, He will reward us.

b. Praying for Our Church Leaders

In the previous lesson and in today’s lesson, we learned about workers who contributed greatly to the church’s growth and also about some who fell away from the truth. From those on our local church board to the workers of the G.A. and the I.A., it is easy to forget that the leaders of our church are only human. We may not be able to help them personally, but when we dedicate time to pray for them, the Spirit will hear our prayers. So, it is important that we “do not cease” in praying for our church leaders (Col 1:9), in giving thanks for them, or in asking for God to give them the “spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him” (Eph 1:15–17). Then, we will see God’s power manifest not only in our lives but also in our church.

2. Whom Does God Use in His Work?

Having occurred in a different time period, the testimonies and miracles of the church’s early growth demonstrate God’s power in ways that are very unlike what we see today. But our church of the past and the present share a common element: good and faithful workers for Christ, whom the Spirit uses for His mighty works.

There were many early workers who contributed to the rapid growth of the true church. But how were these people chosen by God? The early workers of our church all had different strengths, characteristics, and weaknesses. What set them apart from others and allowed God to use them to the fullest in spreading the joy of His grace? How do we also strive to become someone worthy to do His work, to serve Him, and ultimately to be blessed by Him for seeking to fulfill His kingdom?

a. A mind that is set on things above (Col 3:2)

The early workers sought after God every moment of their lives. To be effective servants for God, our daily activities should be centered on the knowledge that there is more than just the “here and now.” Serving ourselves here and now will only profit us in this lifetime, but when we serve God, we lay up for ourselves everlasting treasures in heaven (Mt 6:19–21). No matter how busy our days are, we need to set our hearts and minds on the eternal promises of God.

Revelation 5:8 tells us that the prayers of the saints are collected in heaven, as golden bowls full of incense. To set our minds on things above, we need to examine our prayers: What and who are we praying for? How much time do we spend in prayer? Are our prayers set on God’s work, or on our material desires? It isn’t wrong to pray for our physical needs, but God loves those who seek His kingdom first. Let us ask God to help us set our minds on things above.

b. A persistent spirit

The Bible has examples of promising workers who gave up before completing their duty, such as Demas and John Mark (2 Tim 4:10; Acts 15:37–39). It is easy to become discouraged when serving God. We may even shorten our prayers because we are tired or because our minds are focused on our problems. We fail to rely on God’s power and mercy. We forget to rely on His strength.

Paul encouraged the Galatian members, saying, “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart” (Gal 6:9). God delights in those who persevere and are not easily discouraged from serving Him. As long as a worker does not grow weary in doing good, then God will strengthen them. We need to persistently seek Him out in our prayers and serve Him with determination.

c. A humble heart

When we do a lot of work, it is easy to become proud of what we have done. In the Acts of the Apostles, Barnabas and Paul stopped the people of Lystra from sacrificing to them, crying out with alarm, “Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them” (Acts 14:15). They understood that the miracles they performed were not from their own power but God’s.

In the same way, in whatever we do for the Lord, great or small, we must remember that both our service and the service of those around us are a result of God’s power, not of our own skills, knowledge, or abilities. When our servitude is marred by our pride, we no longer serve God but ourselves. As long as we rely on God with a heart of humility, our work for Him will bear fruit with His blessing.

3. Establishing God’s Church in a Foreign Land

(Teachers: If this was not given as a homework project the previous week but instead given during this lesson, you will need to provide each group with a laptop or tablet with Internet access for research if students do not have their own devices. If it was given the previous week, then use this opportunity to allow students to continue their research or to present what they have put together. You may need to coordinate with your fellow teachers ahead of time.)

The goal of this activity is to understand the various logistical and spiritual considerations involved when preaching and to learn the basics of planning in evangelism. Optional: Divide students into groups of three or four. Collaboration may be difficult if you are giving this to your students as homework, although it would be in and of itself a good lesson on one of the difficulties of establishing a church abroad!)

In these past two weeks, we have learned how believers established churches in brand new places. But the story doesn’t end there. There are still many countries in the world today that have not received the gospel. If you were asked to help evangelize in another country, how would you approach such a project?

The Rules:

- a. Each group has ten years to establish a thirty-person church.
- b. Pick a country that currently does not have a True Jesus Church. Assume that you do **not** have fluent command of the language of that country.
- c. Perform a background check on the country. Answer the following questions:
 - What is the main language?
 - What are the major ethnic groups?
 - What is the main religion?

- What are three major obstacles in preaching in this country?
 - Pretend that you are about to immigrate to the country to establish a church. What would you need? Make a list of ten things you need to prepare for immigration (for example, savings, language, working skills).
- d. Come up with a plan for establishing a church in this foreign land. Include:
- How to overcome language difficulties
 - When and where to start family services
 - How to preach to more people
 - When to apply for prayer house status
 - Who to ask for assistance
 - Needed materials or manpower
 - How many people you would have to bring per year to reach your target goal
- e. Allow each group ten minutes to share their plan. Is it feasible? Why or why not?

Check for Understanding

1. **What event in the New Testament illustrates the power of the Holy Spirit most clearly?** The day of His initial descent, when Peter delivered a powerful sermon that led to around 3,000 newly baptized members.
2. **How can we see the Holy Spirit's power centuries later?** When He worked to build up the true church from the limited number of workers in the early church to our church of today.
3. **How do we continue this work?** We need to continue relying on the power and presence of the Holy Spirit to help us, by praying both for ourselves and for our church leaders.
4. **What are three characteristics of someone God uses for His work?** Someone whose mind is set on things above, who has a persistent spirit, and who has a heart of humility.
5. **How do we maintain a heart of humility?** By remembering that both our service and the service of those around us are a result of God's power, not of our own skills, knowledge, or abilities.

Memory Verse

"Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching." (2 Timothy 4:2)

Meaning

1. To be "ready in season and out of season" means that we must always be equipped with the word of God. Opportunities to preach to others may be fleeting – once the moment passes, it is gone forever. But if we have spent time deeply studying the word of God, we already have it in our hearts and minds. As a result, we will be ready for that moment, no matter when or where it may come.
2. The word of God can be used for four different tasks: to convince, rebuke, exhort, and teach. All of these are valuable tools, not only when inviting others to see Christ, but also in those times when we evangelize by taking a stand for the gospel and defending the truth.

Conclusion

With the power of the Holy Spirit, the gospel has spread and established itself across so many different countries. But the mission that the Lord gave us is still far from complete. We need to continue the work of developing the true church by building up and relying upon the Holy Spirit within us. When we set our minds on things above, maintain a spirit of persistence, and keep a humble heart, our work for Him will bear fruit with His blessing.

Figure 1: True Jesus Church Within World History: Asia (East and Southeast)

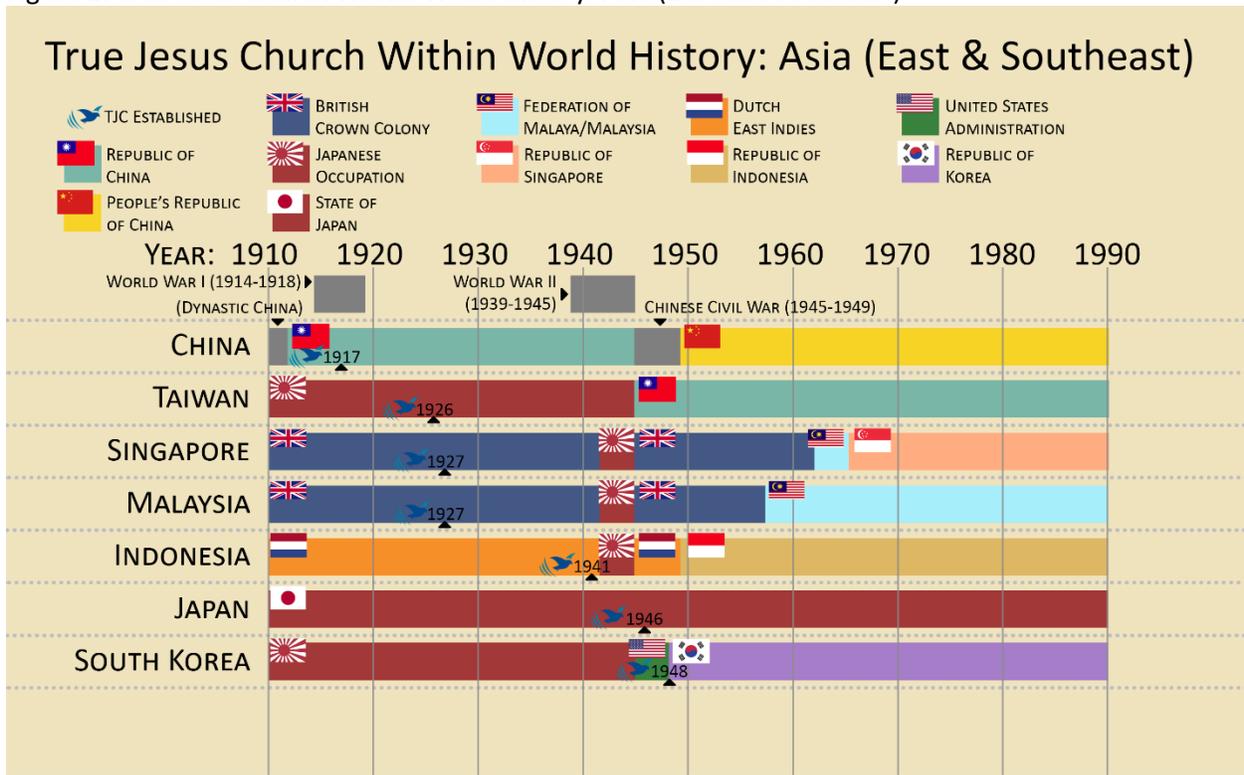
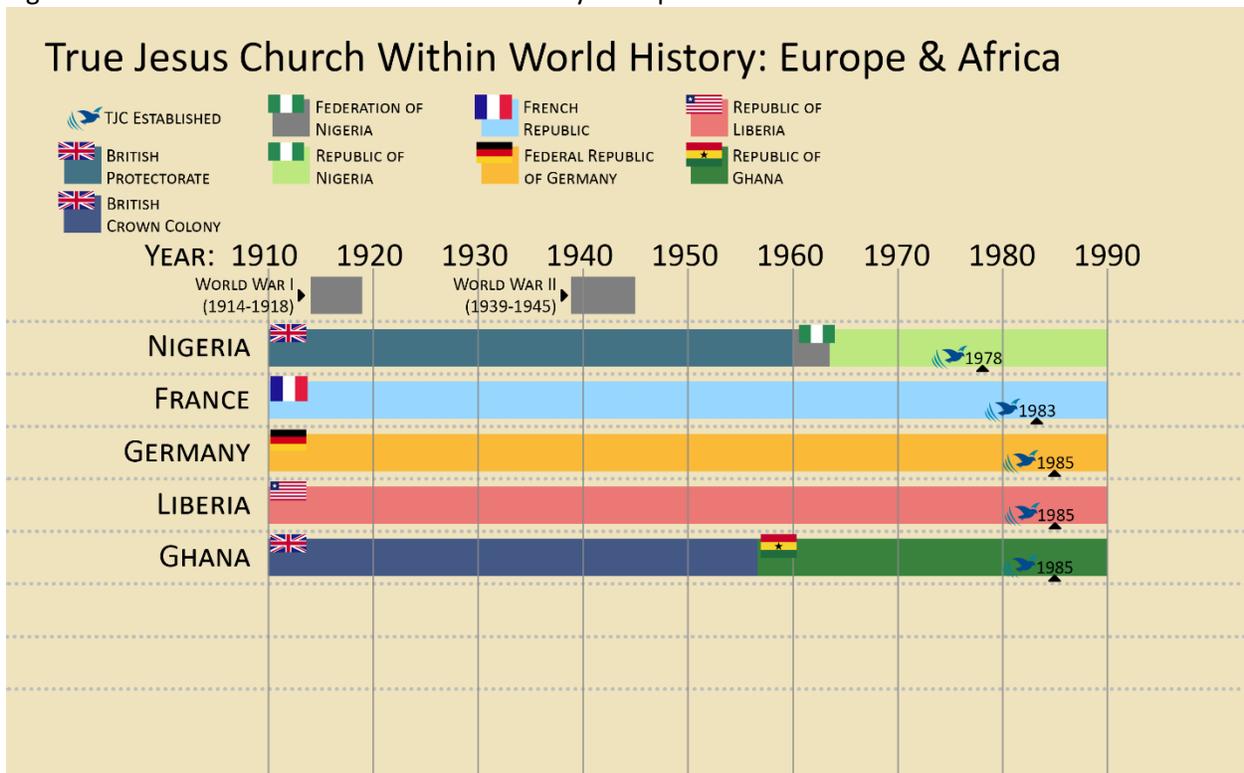


Figure 2: True Jesus Church Within World History: Europe and Africa



Lesson 4 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What does it mean to be “ready in season and out of season”?
It means that we must always be equipped with the word of God, ready to preach to others at any time or any moment.
2. “And let us not grow _____ while _____, for in due _____ we shall _____ if we do not _____.” (Galatians 6:9)
weary, doing good, season, reap, lose heart
3. Why is it so important that we pray for our church leaders?
It is easy to forget that the leaders of our church are only human. When we dedicate time to pray for them, we will see God’s power manifest not only in our lives, but also in our church.
4. What are three characteristics of those God uses for His work?
Those with a mind set on things above, a persistent spirit, and a heart of humility.
5. Why is it so important to maintain this kind of heart?
When our servitude is marred by our pride, we no longer serve God, but ourselves.
6. Of the three characteristics, which do you need to work on the most? Why, and how will you do so?
Personal answers.