

The History of True Jesus Church (III)

Passages: 2 Cor 10:3–6; Jn 7:38; Isa 37:31; Jer 17:7–8; Mt 6:24, 31–34; Ps 1:1–3

Memory Verse

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Work [Behavior]
1. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the gospel was spread to numerous countries beyond China. 2. The Holy Spirit will complete His work of perfecting the true church.	God is truth.	Remain in the truth by letting our faith take root and by nourishing our faith.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. United States: Hawaii Region (1931)
- B. United States: Mainland Regions (1969)
- C. Canada (1971)
- D. South America: Argentina (1983)
- E. Australia (1982)
- F. New Zealand: Christchurch (1989)
- G. Fiji (1994)

Life Application

- 1. Remaining in the Truth
- 2. The Establishment of Our Local Church

Memory Verse

Conclusion: When we choose to remain in Christ, He will bless us, and our spiritual lives will grow. We must let our faith take root and nourish our faith so that our spiritual lives will bear fruit for God.

Spiritual Teachings

Introduction

(Teachers: Since the 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. As a class activity (see Life Application), teachers may even encourage students to research the history of their local church and exchange information with the Junior 1 class of another church.)

God prepared various servants for the different stages of His kingdom expansion. These workers dedicated their gifts and labor in unity to help lay the foundation for the holy work and organization of the church. One of the most important aspects of their work, however, was their determination to stay with Christ and to pursue the truth wherever they were.

Last week, we studied an overview of the global spread of the gospel throughout Asia, Europe, and Africa during the early 1900s. Today, we are going to focus on the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand.

A. United States: Hawaii Region (1931)

We will begin with the Hawaii region, which received the gospel at around the same time as Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Like Sabah, the gospel came to the Hawaiian Islands through literary evangelism. A doctor from Honolulu believed and received baptism in Shanghai in 1930. She mailed a copy of the Holy Spirit Times to her hometown, and her friends and relatives became interested in the truth, with one even traveling to Shanghai to receive baptism. The sister realized the importance of evangelism, and in May of 1930, relinquished her medical practice to return to Honolulu and preach the gospel. Many came to believe, and the Church Headquarters sent workers to Honolulu to continue the missionary work.

Unfortunately, over time, one of its deacons changed their mode of baptism, using a cistern instead of living water. In 1949, upon returning to her hometown and discovering this, a deaconess gathered dedicated members of the True Jesus Church to reorganize themselves. It was not until many years later that they were able to assume the name of True Jesus Church, when the deacon who had instituted the change in baptism finally agreed that the two groups had no connection with each other. From 1950, the Lord kept the re-established church intact, despite having virtually no contact with other churches.

In 1974, a new chapel was purchased in Honolulu, and in 1978, a house of prayer was established on the island of Maui. Family services also began on the island of Kauai from 1989. A pivotal moment in the history of the Honolulu church came when it rejoined the United States General Assembly in 1994. The Lord showed the church a vision of seven candles lined up by the pulpit, with six together and one set apart. The members took it as a sign that God wanted His church to be unified as one body and were strengthened by the Lord's grace and mercy. As of Fall 2018, there are 217 members registered in the Hawaii District.

B. United States: Mainland Regions (1969)

It wasn't until 1967, after the first World Delegates Conference, that the Spirit began to move in the mainland United States. Two U.S. delegates, greatly inspired by the conference, began to gather members together to spread the gospel, holding family services and sharing the truth with friends and family. Despite the size of the continent, the response was overwhelming. Members flew or drove to

meeting places, sometimes driving over ten hours. The strength of their faith and their thirst for the truth brought them together as a driving force for Christ. Many were students with backgrounds in biblical studies, and they brought with them new momentum to the holy work.

In 1976, the first National Delegates Conference was held in El Monte, California, during which the Evangelical Coordination Council was established to mobilize the holy work in the country. Although there were no full-time ministers at first, thanks to God's guidance, by 1986, three full-time ministers were added to the ministry. That same year, the United States General Assembly was established.

1. East Region

The East Region consists of nine churches and two remote area fellowships. In 1967, family services began in New York City. The primary service location moved to New Jersey, and membership continued to increase. In 1978, the Elizabeth church in New Jersey was dedicated to God. In Boston, the first family service was held in 1979 and continued periodically. As families grew larger and more members attended Boston-area universities, the frequency of family services also increased. By 1999, the Boston house of prayer was formed, and a chapel was purchased in 2001.

As membership increased, more local churches were eventually established in the East Region: Queens church in New York, Philadelphia church in Pennsylvania, Hillsborough church in New Jersey, and Tampa church in Florida. There are also services held in Washington D.C., North Carolina, and Miami, Florida. As of Fall 2018, there are 1,092 registered members in the East Region.

2. Southwest Region

Family services in Phoenix, Arizona, began in 1983. As membership increased, a chapel was eventually established. In Southern California, they began earlier in 1968. In 1980, membership was over 100, and a chapel was purchased in Garden Grove in 1982. By 1985, there were 131 members in El Monte and 186 in Garden Grove. More local churches were later established in Southern California, including Irvine, Baldwin Park, Cerritos, and Canoga Park churches. In 2007, the San Diego house of prayer was established. As of Fall 2018, there are 1,371 members in the Southwest Region among eight churches, one house of prayer, and three remote area fellowships.

3. Northwest Region

The Northwest Region consists of five churches and one remote area fellowship. Pacifica church was the first local church established in the mainland United States in 1969. A few families and students met every Sabbath, traveling long distances to worship together. After moving around several locations, a chapel was finally purchased and dedicated in 1985. Local churches in San Jose and Sacramento, as well as houses of prayer in East Bay and Seattle, were also established. As of Fall 2018, there are 545 members registered in the Northwest Region.

4. Central Region

The Central Region consists of three churches and two remote area fellowships. Chicago church began when a deaconess moved to Chicago to join her children in 1979, resulting in seven members gathering for worship services. A chapel was later purchased in Chicago and dedicated to God in the year 2000. In Houston, the first spiritual convocation was held in 1981. After two years, land was purchased, and a chapel was built and dedicated to God. A local church was also

established in Dallas after more members moved to the area. Remote area fellowships meet regularly in Austin, Texas, and St. Louis, Missouri. As of Fall 2018, there are 394 registered members in the Central Region.

C. Canada (1971)¹

Family services on the east coast began as members immigrated into the region, and later on, in 1971, the Toronto house of prayer was established. The Lord brought more brothers and sisters to join them, and the first baptism was performed in 1975. Later, as more members from different countries immigrated to Toronto, an apartment was purchased and dedicated for services in 1977.

Unfortunately, due to noise complaints in 1980, the Toronto brethren began a four-year period of wandering, holding services in rented halls. In 1984, they purchased a building previously owned by the Hungarian Pentecostal church. Around 1992, however, a larger building was needed, and after several years of searching and planning, the members bought a piece of land and built the present-day Toronto church, dedicating it in July 1996.

Elsewhere, a steady increase of immigrants, mainly from Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Taiwan, brought a growth of members in various locations across Canada from the 1970s to 1990s. In the 2000s, believers from China followed in large numbers to settle in the country, and with God's guidance, churches across Canada were established one by one in Toronto (1971), Vancouver (1988), Edmonton (1990), Calgary (1994), and Montreal (1994). As of 2017, there are 867 registered members across the country.

D. South America: Argentina (1983)²

Thanks to God's guidance and power, the gospel seed has grown throughout Central and South America, with four houses of prayer, one church, and one point of worship as of 2015. We will focus on Argentina church, which began when True Jesus Church members, primarily from Taiwan, began immigrating into the continent. They started monthly family services in 1983, and two years later, a member's house was established as a house of prayer in 1985. Membership continued to grow, and in 1989, a bigger house was purchased for worship. Later, in 1991, the True Jesus Church was registered with the government. The year 1992 marked the first spiritual convocation in Argentina, and the Coordination Center for South America was established. God blessed the church, and due to substantial member growth, a factory building was purchased in 2000 and later dedicated in 2007. As of 2017, there are 564 registered members.

E. Australia (1982)

Worship services in Melbourne and Sydney began around 1982 and consisted of students and immigrants from Southeast Asia and Hong Kong. With the immigration of believers from Taiwan, a church in Brisbane was established in 1994. Some believers from Sydney moved to Perth, and services began there in 1997. Darwin's place of worship was established in 2001, when East Timorese brethren in Melbourne preached to their friends and relatives, while home services in Adelaide began in 2005. Between brethren immigrating from other countries and the church's internal growth, membership in Australia steadily grew, with very multicultural congregations. The Australia Coordination Board was legally constituted in 2010 and began coordinating training and evangelical work throughout Australia.

¹ Manna Magazine Issue #76, "The True Jesus Church in Canada" (USA, June 2015, True Jesus Church, IA Department of Literary Ministry) <http://ia.tjc.org/elibrary/ContentDetail.aspx?ItemID=31592&langid=1>.

² Manna Magazine Issue #80, "Our Churches in Central and South America" (USA, June 2016, True Jesus Church, IA Department of Literary Ministry) <http://ia.tjc.org/elibrary/ContentDetail.aspx?ItemID=33517&langid=1>.

At the point of writing, there are five churches registered with the Australian Coordination Board, with two in Perth, one each in Melbourne and Sydney, and one in Brisbane. There is also one house of prayer in Adelaide, one place of worship in Darwin, and a handful of believers in Hobart, Tasmania, and Roxby Downs in South Australia. In total, Australia has 1,002 registered members as of 2017.

F. New Zealand: Christchurch (1989)

Members from the Taiwan church immigrated to Christchurch, New Zealand in 1989. Although they had arrived separately, they immediately commenced family services each Sabbath, and the number of members remained around ten until 1991. That year, God opened the door of evangelism, and many truth seekers came to attend family services of their own accord. However, they asked various questions that placed enormous pressure on the members, and as such, the members put greater effort into praying, studying, and learning the teachings of the Bible. This led to a revival of the members' excitement and desire for God's word, and their faith was edified and strengthened in love and truth.

That same year, 1991, the International Assembly and the Southeast Asia Evangelical Centre took responsibility for the growth of the Christchurch house of prayer. Although preachers could only visit every four to five months, the growth of the house of prayer was slow but steady, with miracles and signs that proved that what the church preached was correct and true. The members' homes could no longer accommodate all of the brethren, so in 1992, the church decided to rent a school hall as a place of worship. As a rented area, however, it had its inconveniences, so they searched for a permanent solution.

The brethren eventually found a location which was ideal in size and facilities for a church building. The price was incredibly cheap for its size and location, but it was well outside of their budget. However, thanks to God's grace and the love of members around the world, the Christchurch brethren were able to purchase a building. The church was dedicated in 1994, and in 1996, the congregation applied and received permission from the International Assembly to be established as a church. As of 2017, there are 465 registered members in Christchurch and Auckland combined.

G. Fiji (1994)

The seed of the gospel was first sown in Fiji in the year 1994, and in 1995, the first house of prayer was established in Lautoka. The Australian Coordination Board took responsibility for the pastoral work, and in the year 2000, another house of prayer in Suva was established through door-to-door evangelism. For several years, members volunteered to visit and help develop the church, and services were held in the homes of various members. The church continued to grow when members from Fuqing, China, immigrated to Fiji, and from 2011–2017, the Fiji members refocused on evangelical work. It was not until 2017 that the True Jesus Church in Fiji finally obtained approval from the government after two years of waiting and was officially registered as a religious group. As of 2018, there are approximately thirty-five baptized members spread across five locations in Suva, Navua, Nadi, and Lautoka.

Life Application

1. Remaining in the Truth

Today, we learned about many places across the world in which the gospel took root and grew. In all of these, there is a familiar story: members who move to a new country but are nonetheless determined to stay in the truth. Unfortunately, there are also many brethren who are pulled away by the desires and distractions of the world. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul reminded them that "though we walk in

the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.” Each day is a spiritual battle to cast down “every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God” and to bring “every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor 10:3–6).

If you were to move away from home, would you keep attending Sabbath services at church? Would you continue to pray each day, out of your own choice? No matter where we go or who we live with, when we choose to remain in Christ, “out of [our] heart[s] will flow rivers of living water” (Jn 7:38). We will be blessed by God and become a blessing for those around us, bringing others to life and light. Our spiritual lives will grow. But how do we stay in the truth?

a. Let Our Faith Take Root

Isaiah 37:31 says, “And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.” To grow and bear fruit in our spirituality, we must first spread our roots downwards. But how do we do this? Let’s turn to Jeremiah 17:7–8. To become a “tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river,” our tree of faith needs to be rooted in our trust and hope in the Lord. To trust and hope in the Lord means to understand that He is taking care of us, and that He knows what is best for us. It means taking comfort in the hope that He is always watching over us (Mt 6:31–34).

When you need to make decisions about your future, do you prioritize your own interests, or do you trust in God’s guidance? When your family has to let go of a big opportunity because of church, do you have the hope that God will provide? When we learn to trust Him every day and hope in His guidance for every decision, big or small, we are letting our faith take root downwards.

b. Nourish Our Faith

Did you know that different flowers require different types of plant food? Plants that are given incorrect plant food can wither because they have been given the wrong nutrients. If we fill our hearts with the desires of this world, our faith will, in turn, wither and die (Mt 6:24). As children of God, we need to nourish ourselves with the correct food. Let’s read Psalm 1:1–3. The best way to nourish our faith is by meditating on God’s law day and night.

When we seek a deeper understanding of God’s will, we gain a greater understanding of His character, especially His love for us. As a result, we will learn to treasure His word in our hearts and take delight in His law. By nourishing our faith with knowledge of the Lord, our spiritual lives will bear fruit like a tree planted by the waters, and our leaves will not wither even when faced with tribulation. Even in a “year of drought,” whether physical or spiritual, we will not be anxious nor cease from bearing fruit (Jer 17:8).

2. The Establishment of Our Local Church

(Teachers: To help with this project, you may want to gather some materials beforehand, such as any books or articles, online or printed, that contain information on your local church.)

Do you know the origins of your own church? Do you know what kind of difficulties the members faced when growing and developing a worship service for your region? What kinds of decisions did they have to face at the time? How did God guide your local church into what it is today?

For this project, we are going to try and research the history of our own church. This may require time outside of class, spent asking other members or researching online. Gather your materials, and try to find as much information as you can, such as the following:

- The starting date for services in this region.
- Where the first members originally came from – were they immigrants? Locals who were converted?
- When and how membership began to grow.
- Any difficulties or trials the members may have faced.
- Any significant dates in the history of your church. When was the first baptism? Spiritual convocation? If applicable, when did you purchase the building currently used for services?

Once you have gathered an overview, put together a poster with a timeline of events, highlighting any important dates or events.

Memory Verse

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

Meaning

1. It is easy to forget God’s presence in our daily lives, but we must be diligent in our faith so that the day we present ourselves before the heavenly throne, we will be approved by God. To be an approved worker, one who “does not need to be ashamed,” our decisions each day need to be based on His will. When we stand before God’s judgment, will our conscience be clear?
2. To misinterpret the truth, either deliberately or by mistake, is a very grave sin. If one day we work for God in a remote region or become a worker or RE teacher in our local church, it is vital that we handle the truth correctly, without twisting or manipulating it to suit our needs. To do so, we must learn to open ourselves to God’s will and seek out the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, so that we can understand the Bible’s meaning more clearly.

Check for Understanding

1. **What is a common story in the origins of all the churches that we learned about today?** Members who move to a new country but are nonetheless determined to stay in the truth.
2. **What is one of the dangers we face when we move away from home?** The danger of being pulled away by the desires and distractions of the world.
3. **How do we grow and bear fruit in our spirituality?** We must first spread our roots downwards and let our tree of faith be rooted in our trust and hope in the Lord.
4. **What does it mean to trust and hope in the Lord?** It means to understand that He is taking care of us, and that He knows what is best for us. It means taking comfort in the hope that He is always watching over us (Mt 6:31–34).
5. **What is the best way to nourish our faith?** As children of God, we need to nourish ourselves with the correct food. The best way to nourish our faith is by meditating on God’s law day and night.

Conclusion

When we determine to stay in the truth, God will bless us, and our spiritual lives will grow. To stay in the truth, we must let our faith take root by trusting in Him and nourish our faith by gaining a greater

understanding of His character. Then, no matter where we go in the future, our spiritual lives will bear fruit for God, like a tree planted by the waters.

Lesson 5 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. How do we rightly divide the word of truth?
We must learn to open ourselves to God's will and seek out the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, so that we can understand the Bible's meaning more clearly.

2. " _____ is the man who _____ in the LORD, and whose _____ is the LORD. For he shall be like a _____ by the _____, which _____ out its _____ by the _____." (Jeremiah 17:7–8a)
Blessed, trusts, hope, tree, planted, waters, spreads, roots, river.

3. How do we remain in the truth?
By letting our faith take root, and by nourishing our faith.

4. How do we let our faith take root?
By trusting in God every day and hoping in His guidance for every decision we make, big or small.

5. What happens when we nourish ourselves with the correct "food" for our faith?
By nourishing our faith with knowledge of the Lord, our spiritual lives will bear fruit like a tree planted by the waters, and our leaves will not wither even when faced with tribulation.

6. Share a time when you prioritized your own interests over God's guidance.
Personal answers.