

Feature

Deep Ploughing and Careful Cultivation, Every Second Counts!

Otto Lui

Associate General Secretary (Training)

With tightening regulations of religious policies in China, the space for serving mainland churches is wearing thin. Supporting mainland churches with leadership has become a race against the clock! Yet the faith of younger generations lacks experience. When they encounter difficulties and attacks, when they are



exhausted in service, they are fighting the battles alone, they may be willing in heart but weak in practice. How can they lead the church to move forward? They long for role models in life and appropriate pastoral resources to accompany them through the ups and downs of life, and live out their calling!

This is walking together with deep ploughing and careful cultivation! Can you hear their cry?

In 2010, God moved the managerial staff of CCL to make leadership training as the focus of the next ten years. In these years, CCL has not only continued to promote “Living Word” Bible studies and the long-term training of small group leaders, it has also promoted leadership training for those in church and in the marketplace, and explored the practical implementation of “business as mission”. The long-term goals are cultivating “life mentors” through mentoring (one-to-one or small group meetings), walking together and provide pastoral care for them.

In this direction, we continue to provide books and resources to the libraries of mainland seminaries, and every seminary graduate a set of basic reference books, so that they can

always be supported by these “mute teachers” when they start their work in church. With the widespread use of mobile phone networks, CCL not only publishes books in printed versions of Simplified Chinese, but also e-books. By downloading our “eReading” app on smartphones and tablet computers, digitized books can be accessed at any time and place, and can be delivered directly into the hands of registered users — church workers. We have also invited senior pastors to be internet pastors, to keep in contact with readers through our system and provide them with the help needed at the right time.

Participants can make the most of their unique personality traits through small group learning



Under the religious policies of China, the ministries of CCL will only be slightly affected. We are seeing the incredible guidance of God, it is amazing. In obeying the Lord, CCL changed its ministry models a few years ago, overcoming restrictions through innovation. In regard to training, we have trained mainland workers to carry out first-line training, thus

reducing the chance of attracting official attention to teachers from outside the mainland. At the same time, a lot of training is carried out in small-groups, which can be flexible to change. Five to six leadership training events are held by CCL in Hong Kong every year. Although the cost is increasing, the effect is even better. In response to the direction of “business as mission”, CCL is not registered as a Non-Profit Organization (NPO), so our ministries are not directly affected by the new regulations.

Regarding to publishing, Christian literature in the mainland has been under severe regulation for two years. We have already opened the door to publishing through mainland seminaries. Innovative e-books are a tool to overcome these restrictions, and to allow us to publish books freely for mainland churches.

We thank the Lord for opening the way, and for guiding CCL to create new ministries even under restrictions, and gather resources in the face of adversity. We don't know when the door will be closed, but we need to grasp the opportunities in a difficult situation and take care of what is entrusted to us by the Lord.

Supporting Pastors

Servants of the Lord: Don't Give Up

Thanks to God's guidance, we supported 15 pastors in the Southwest, East, Northwest, North and South Central China regularly in the year of 2016. They came from cities as well as rural areas. The support was administered according to their practical needs and local standards of living.

Many mainland churches still think that pastors should endure hardship and so only offer minimal wages or food for their subsistence. Thus our living subsidy can help ease the financial burden of these pastors, the loyal servants of Christ, and enable them to concentrate on their ministry and groom more faithful disciples to spread the Gospel.

Life is Difficult, but Grace is Unfathomable **– Sister Tang, staff of a church in North China**

Impoverished dwelling of Sister Tang



Sixteen years ago, I graduated from a Bible school and returned to serve in my home church. Apart from running a nursing home of the church (caring for more than 20 elderly, at ages from 60 to over 90), I preach in a number of gathering points in the villages every week.

I grow wheat in five mu of land for living and need to take care of my husband, who suffered from cerebral hemorrhage four years ago and now only has the intelligence of a 4-year-old. Under my care also are my over-80-year-old grandmother, over-60-year-old mother-in-law and father-in-law, plus two young daughters of mine. I am grateful to the Lord for giving me many years

of support through CCL. Though I bustle around all day long, I have experienced immense grace of the Lord and don't feel I am shouldering all these alone.

I realize that our church is deficient in pasturing and I hope for change. Other than Sunday worships, there are gatherings in believers' homes and I want to do better pastoral work among the leaders of different villages. In the future, I wish to meet up with other churches or pastoral staff who have similar experiences and learn from them.

Sister Tang (middle)



Cross-cultural Mission

Transformation of Marketplace: Live Out the Gospel

Our training on marketplace leadership has reached East, North, South and Central China, and will extend to other areas such as the Southwest and Northeast regions in succession. The participants, coming from churches, seminaries, commercial and industrial fellowships, and various organizations and enterprises, may join a variety of training courses, talks or workshops.



Joseph (left) went on a field study for business as mission

In 2016, the teaching team continued to establish networks in different locations, and through talks about the marketplace and business as mission, participants were educated to combine career/business with mission. They learned that spreading the Gospel is not limited to preaching and verbal communication. The behavior of Christians in their marketplace and careers can live out the Gospel and the Lord's teachings as well.

With closer relationship with the participants, the mentors were able to provide personal guidance to them in 2016. This has equipped them with the knowledge on how to handle business issues and situations of conflict, and how to apply what they have learned from the Bible and bear witness for our Lord.

Sharing from a Participant: Stand Firm and Serve the Lord

Joseph (A Trainee of Marketplace and Business as Mission Course)

As the stationery store I worked in had not been doing well, I returned to my home town in November and helped my family run a new fast food shop. In the beginning, three neighboring shops came together to lodge complaints against us for encroaching areas beyond our shop boundary. We acted in obedience and adjusted our usage of space. Thereafter, our Hubei food and featured snacks gradually gained popularity and the business bloomed. Copycats emerged and eventually affected the profits of two other shops as well. It resulted in quarrels and confrontations amongst themselves, and illegal imitation of each other's products. However, we have a peaceful mind given by the Lord and avoided being involved in immoral competition and touting of customers. We manage to do our

business in a responsible way. By the end of the year, in spite of reduced customer flow in the shopping center, our business has not declined. Thanks to the Lord!

No matter how our business fares, our family members take an early rest every Sunday and go to church service. It is not an easy move for a fast food shop. Praise the Lord, everything goes smoothly in our business and I truly feel that the Lord watches over us. Without the guidance of God, we could hardly stand firm in this chaotic shopping center.

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