

Leadership Development

The Living Word – A believers' companion for spiritual growth

© Xiao Tung
Frontline worker in China Ministry



Believers often encounter difficulties when they study the Bible. Ministers try to help them understand the teachings in individual biblical books more fully and integrate what they learn into daily life. Evangelist Su serves in a church in the Northeast region, she has been using the “*Living Word*” materials to teach the Bible in her church for many years and has built up the spiritual lives of many believers. Last year the study groups she led completed the “*Living Word – Jeremiah*” course. Then they continue with the “*Living Word – Twelve Prophets*” this year. The students felt they have learnt a great deal throughout the course, and Su is witnessing the growth of both the group leaders as well as individual members.

Believers are motivated to live out their faith: While studying the “*Living Word - Twelve Prophets*”, Evangelist Su noticed remarkable improvements in the believers' practice of the truth in daily life. She said, “*In the past, believers were unsure how to live out their faith, they did not know how to base their daily activities upon God's Words. However, through the ‘Living Word’ study, believers are now capable of actively applying God's Words in daily life. For example, when we were studying the Book of Hosea, which describes an adulterous woman as resembling the Israelites' worship of idols, believers started examining if there are idols in their own lives, whether or not they covet the world and if they are following God's will. After rigorous contemplation and*



The group leader shares with the group members how the teachings in the scriptures apply to their own lives.

reflection, they acknowledged their own shortcomings and disobedience, and that they are not any better than the Israelites. They become aware of the need to be vigilant at all times."

God's Words are looping in believers' hearts: Each lesson in the "Living Word" textbook contains one or two verses called "key verses". Evangelist Su noticed how believers make good use of the "key verses". She said, "*The 'key verses' are the finishing touch to each lesson, and believers take the initiative to recite them. These Bible verses become their daily guide. Such initiative has ripple effects. Not only are they meditating the Bible passages of the 'Living Word' course every day, they attempt memorizing verses from other biblical books as well. God's Words empower lives of those who have a desire for them.*" Su hopes the believers can have a thorough understanding of God's Words and in turn teach their children or share with their colleagues at work. They want to study each biblical book in detail, so sometimes they divide a lesson into three or even five sub-sessions.

The service battery is rekindled: There are believers of all age groups studying the Bible using the "Living Word" series as study guide. Evangelist Su is witnessing a revival in the believers' commitment to serve. She said, "*The group leaders are keen to prepare for each lesson, they are dedicated to nurture the spiritual life of their group members. The group members in turn are becoming devoted to serve in the church, they are willing to take up even the most humble chaos such as the cleaning of the church's physical building. They see it as their fundamental responsibility. There are also Christian leaders who have been studying the Bible using the 'Living Word' series for many years, they are becoming increasingly competent in exegesis. I have identified one such leader and invited him to share at the church. I found that he really has great potential for ministry. I am thankful to the Lord for his growth.*"

A tie that binds the faith community together: Evangelist Su said this to us more than once, "*I am so thankful for the 'Living Word' materials!*" During the pandemic, she saw many churches in the vicinity suffered serious loss of their congregations. But within the church she serves, leaders and members are held together because they have been studying "Living Word" together. The unobstructed communications have made their relationships grown even stronger. Although some believers left the church, new members were attracted to join. The number of small groups has grown from four at the very beginning to 16 within a few years, there are now 22 groups altogether. Sunday worship attendance is around 260 on average with up to 300 at certain occasions.



Studying "Living Word" can make the relationship between believers closer and bring everyone together.

Concluding remarks: After resuming physical gatherings, small groups are holding their study sessions at church. But some young adults cannot join because of work, so Evangelist Su studies the "Living Word" with them through alternative modes. Their study of the "Living Word - Twelve Prophets" is continuing. May the Lord give them wisdom to understand His Words and apply what they learn in daily life.

Please support the Living Word Bible Teaching Ministry

Funds needed: USD 96,154

Believers in churches are eager to learn the truth in China. The **Living Word** series is a study guide which can help them learn the truth and live out their faith. Please pray for their spiritual growth and offer your donation to support the **Living Word Bible Teaching Ministry**. The publication of “*Living Word – Revelation*” (2,000 copies of the teachers' manual and 8,000 copies of study guide) is our target this year, we plan to conduct related leadership training as well.

Please offer your prayers and donation to support the **Living Word Bible Teaching Ministry**, thank you!

~The above is part of the content of PFC issue361, if you would like to read the full newsletter, please contact us at pfc@ccl.org.hk, thank you!~

All rights reserved. Neither this publication nor any part of it may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the prior permission of Christian Communications Limited. Publication is published every month by Christian Communications Limited.