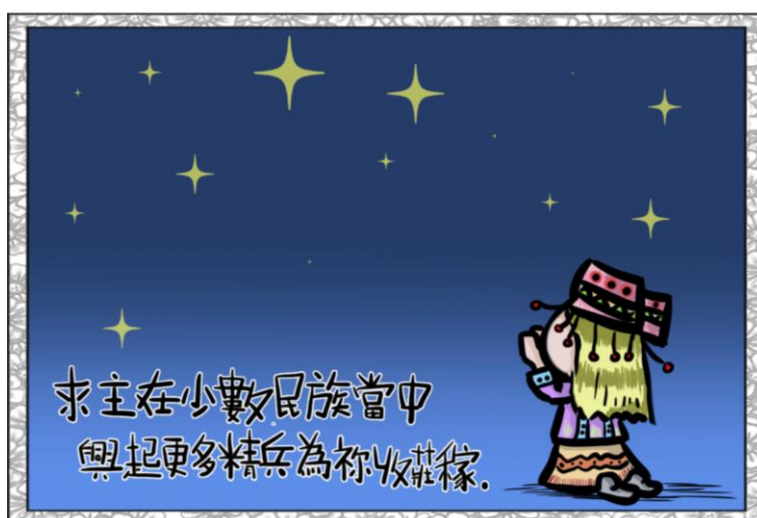


Where Our Timelines Intersect

© Teacher Wu
Evangelist in China

A local Christian was inspired to paint a picture that he named "Soldiers of Christ". Believers pray for the ministry in China with a unified spirit, mutual understanding, and deep friendship.



In the early nineties, I read the book "J. Hudson Taylor - A Man in Christ"¹ in preparation for my theology study. When I came across Hudson Taylor's famous quote, "If I had a thousand pounds, China should have it. If I had a thousand lives, China should have them", the love for China emerged inside me like a fierce storm, and this passion has been lingering in my heart ever since. The wish of "serving the Chinese people in China" has been seeded, and it is awaiting the prime season for germination.

As a matter of fact, prior to this subtle experience that arose while I was reading, I had already spent a year and three months traveling around the provinces and finding opportunities to serve. I served in a church founded with the support of the "China Inland Mission (CIM)", then I moved on to serve in a Bible training school that turns out to be of CIM heritage. During that time, I met some brothers and sisters who were on the "Experiential Tour"². They are dedicated to serving churches in China, their devotion to offering their time, money, resources, etc. through various means, and their genuine love

for the Lord greatly encouraged me. I apprehend that all living beings can manifest the infinite power of the Lord, there can be a great variety of ways to serve Him, where they need not conform to a single model.

There can also be multiple ways to teach the Bible. The Word of God is the source of life, and it is the foundation for building up faith. Having read the "Be Series"³ by Warren W. Wiersbe, I fully agree with the advocacy of "going back to the Bible". After that, I reached "The Living Word Bible Teaching Series"⁴ which uses an interactive learning model. Unlike the didactic teaching mode in the past, which is vertical, it serves as a bridge to promote learning and stimulate believers' spontaneity in reading the Bible. In order to achieve this goal, group leaders play a very crucial role. If more group leaders become familiar with the Living Word study method, it is likely that the ministry would experience exponential growth.

In the early 2000s, I met a Living Word teacher on a gloomy snowy day. Since then, under his guidance, I learned to serve and gradually became a teacher myself training Living Word leaders. Now, my time is mainly spent on finding opportunities to train leaders who want to build up the Living Word Bible study program in their churches. I also visit churches and meet with local believers. I try to gain first-hand knowledge of how churches around the country are nurturing the faith communities under the current religious environment and to understand their needs so that support and training can be most appropriately delivered.

In one gathering point, several of our co-workers have established spiritual partnerships with young believers, and they together often visit nearby villages to spread the influence of the gospel. One needs to be patient with evangelism and cannot demand immediate results. First, we should understand the spiritual situation of the villagers. Next, we try establishing a friendly relationship with them. Then, if ever a suitable entry point arises, we will introduce the gospel with a cordial and sincere tone under a peaceful atmosphere.

In the ministry team, there are evangelists who are post-80s, they are stronger in terms of knowledge, logical thinking, and self-critique than those of the post-70s. For issues like the inclusiveness of faith, traditional versus modern modes of pastoral care, worship, teaching, etc., they have individual views and understanding. They are more daring to change and try out innovative ideas such as newer or mixed modes of worship, teaching, and pastoral care.

However, sometimes young people are limited in their cognitive understanding of others' situations and focus too much on the needs of their own group, disagreement with older brothers and sisters can be disproportionately blown up, and new "reforms" may cause churches to split into rivalry groups and even break apart into independent churches.

Such a situation is perhaps inevitable, we are bombarded by secularism, post-modernism, and other challenges nowadays, and no one has control over the tides of time. The only standard that holds true forever is the Bible, and we all need to "go back to the Bible" in order to stand firm in faith. God calls His servants to plant the Word in every believer's life, and by faith, we are tasting His blessings. Let's wait on with hope and live out a life that manifests the predestined beautiful colours of God's plan.

In retrospect, we see the invisible hand of the Heavenly Father who is weaving all the strands together, enabling us to wait on and get ready to serve Him in the most appropriate harvest field He has entrusted to us.

¹ J. Hudson Taylor - A Man in Christ by Roger Steer. The book is published by CCL and is available in simplified Chinese and traditional Chinese editions.

² " Experiential Tour in China" was a tour organized by CCL in the 1990s which aimed at allowing Hong Kong Christians to visit churches in different parts of China in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current situation and their needs.

³ Be Series by Warren W. Wiersbe. This series of Bible commentaries was translated into simplified Chinese and published by CCL in the early years of its ministry. The series covers many books of the Old and New Testaments.

⁴ The Living Word Bible Teaching Series was developed and published by CCL. It invigorates Bible study and emphasizes living out the truth. The production of this series is still ongoing.

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## Be part of Our Ministry

Thank you for your continued concern for the needs of churches and leaders in China, and we hope that you will continue to walk with us and the churches in the days to come.

Invitation to support the needs of ministries:

- a. In support of Putonghua-speaking community ministry
- b. Provide Literature resources for novice pastors
- c. Provide living subsidy for pastors
- d. Equip pastoral leaders for leadership development

Thank you!



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~The above is part of the content of PFC issue368, if you would like to read the full newsletter, please contact us at pfc@ccl.org.hk, thank you!~

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