

The Unsaid Words Behind the Postcard

“Family” Restraints



The artist's story

Ke Li is the artist who created this painting using acrylic and brushes.

Ke Li is an evangelist in China, he is very committed to serving the ethnic minorities and teaching the Bible. He studied art before he responded to his calling, and thereafter he travelled extensively in China, using photography to document local customs and colours. Now he uses painting as a means to partner with CCL, allowing the life and ministry of field evangelists to be seen, and to promote missionary education, so that Hong Kong Christians can know more about God's work in China.

In this postcard picture, we see dark and heavy iron chains, they resemble the physical and mental restraints that can imprison a person, such as fame, fortune, desire, power, environment, etc., and one of these restraints can originate from one's family.

When discussing the challenges in shepherding the young generation, many pastors agree that apart from social media and modern trends, the influence of family plays a key role. How children and young people grow up affects their interpersonal relationships, their self-awareness and identity, and their attitude toward courtship and marriage. When they get married and raise a family, they inevitably carry with them the influence of their family of origin into the new family, even the bad memories and traumas. These "family" restraints will affect their spouses and will even extend to the next generation.

*"Some sat in darkness and the shadow of death, prisoners in affliction and irons, ... Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and burst their bonds apart."
(Psalm 107:10, 13-14 ESV)*

How can one break free from the "family" restraints? The artist feels the pain and helplessness when he sees the young ones suffer the trauma caused by their families. It was around Easter when he created the painting, and soon he was reminded of the power of the Lord Jesus Christ who overcame darkness and rose from the dead. **By the power of the gospel, the "family" restraints can be untied or severed, the once confined individuals are freed to display their bright and colourful selves.**

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## Is it appropriate to include marriage and family materials in Book Gifting?

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Book Gifting Team

When the “China Seminary Graduates Book Gifting Project” book list is reviewed every year, a deliberate effort is made to include materials on marriage, family, and parenting that are suitable for novice pastors. When we have the opportunity to share the Book Gifting ministry in churches in Hong Kong or to interested Christians, one question always comes up, *“Isn’t it most appropriate to provide exclusively biblical and theological materials to ministers in China?”*

As mentioned previously, older pastors in China regarded “church” as their first and foremost priority, so much so that believers used this to measure how faithful their pastors were. Subsequently, many problems and crises occurred in the pastors' families. For example, the husband and wife were pastors of different churches, and each of them was very busy serving their own churches. The marital relationship between husband and wife was neglected. Their children also developed negative attitudes towards faith or the church because they felt their parents cared more about other people than they did about themselves.

Whenever we see or hear about the family situation of these pastors, we feel sad for them. The pastors have been taking very good care of the church, yet their families are full of old scars and new wounds. Therefore, the Book Gifting team would like to remind the graduates of the importance of family before they commence frontline ministry. Family should be a pastor’s strongest support, or else a breach is left for Satan to attack! In the past few years, the Book Gifting team has visited seminaries during their graduation ceremonies to talk to teachers and students, and our co-workers have always encouraged the graduates with the following: *“No matter where you work in the future, you must remember that your family is your first and most important harvest field!”* On top of the verbal encouragement, the Book Gifting resources are well received by the graduates as they regard the materials as very useful for responding to different life situations. They are indeed a blessing to the graduates.

Below are some of the responses made by teachers from various seminaries in response to the Book Gifting Project:

**Southwestern region:** The pastoral packages prepared by CCL for our graduates are very much appreciated, of which “*Integral Pre-marital Counseling*” and “*Why True Love Waits*” are especially useful to them. The graduates are 18-22 years old individuals and are just entering the stage of courtship or marriage. **They would definitely read these books to learn more about these important stages in their lives.**

**Eastern region:** This teacher used to be a recipient of the Book Gifting package. More than 10 years have passed, he is now a father of two sons. He still reads and uses “*How to be a Hero to Your Kids*” and “*The Bare Facts*” to learn how to be a father. **He is very grateful for having the Book Gifting package, the resources have accompanied him through different stages of life and when he starts his family.**

**The Bible puts a strong emphasis on “family”, and the families of church leaders have a great influence on the Christian community. Let’s work together to support church leaders to build up pious families and raise faithful children!**

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## “Family Leadership” Training



A group of parents are listening attentively as the instructor shares the Bible's teachings about family. May the Lord continue to guide these parents so that they will always honour the Lord in their respective families.



In a parents’ seminar conducted online, the speaker shares what today's young people (Generation Z) want to say to their parents, and guides parents to understand their children's way of thinking.

# Supporting Families of Leaders

Family should be a pastor's strongest support.  
We invite you to become a companion to pastors in China.  
Your prayers and offerings will help protect the pastor's family.

✓ Your donation support is needed

If it is the Lord's will, this year we hope to achieve the following:



The Book Gifting materials not only help the graduates in frontline pastoral ministry but also meet their personal needs.



The Book Gifting team carefully selects materials on marriage and family for graduates every year.

## a. Provide Literature Resources

[Project: Literature Ministry (Resources Giveaway)]

Target Recipients: 3,000 novice pastors of 50 seminaries

Pastoral Package: Each kit contains 15 pastoral references (printed books and e-books)

Specific Items Include:

1. On courtship: "Why True Love Waits" or "Integral Pre-marital Counseling"
2. On marriage: "Love as We First Met" or "Lifemates"
3. On parenting: "The Father Connection" or "The Bare Facts"

**Funding Required: USD 462,000**

**(Each Pastoral package costs USD 154)**

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b. Conduct Family Leadership Training

[Project: Leadership Development Ministry]

Target Participants: 1,500 parents and pastors

Training: 20 meetings, including couples camp, parent classes, seminars, etc

Funding Required: USD 5,900 (USD 295 per session)

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~The above is part of the content of PFC issue374, if you would like to read the full newsletter,  
please contact us at [pfc@ccl.org.hk](mailto:pfc@ccl.org.hk), thank you!~

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