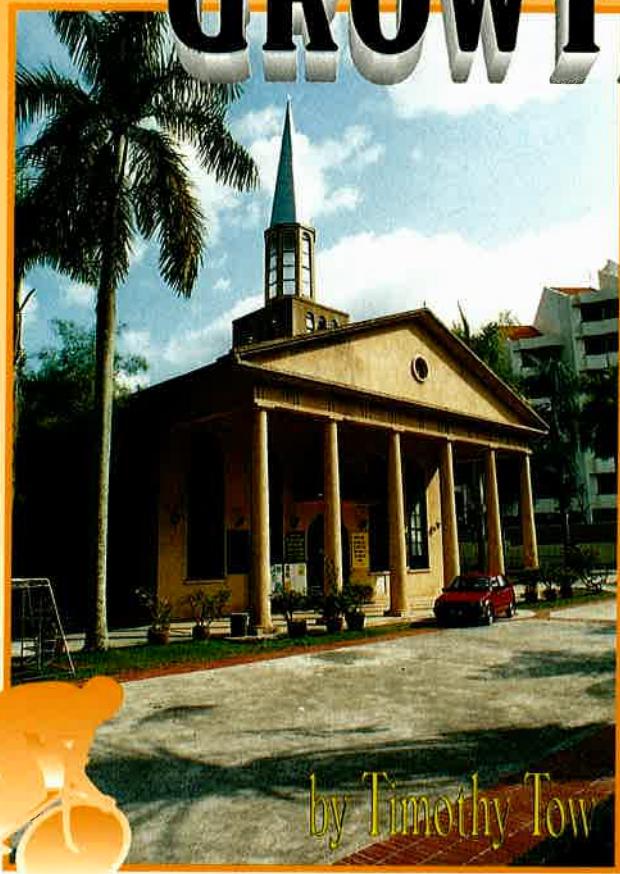
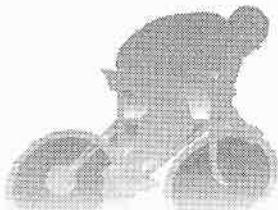


# **Forty years ... to CHURCH GROWTH**



by Timothy Tow

**Forty  
years  
on the road  
to CHURCH  
GROWTH**



by Timothy Tow

**FORTY YEARS ON THE ROAD  
TO CHURCH GROWTH**

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*To*

*Rev Silas C. T. Hsu,  
my companion in the Gospel  
for over four decades,  
this book is affectionately dedicated.*



*Go ye into all the world*

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## **On The Road**

There are many who roam this world  
In search of glitt'ring gem and pearl.  
A Christian on the road today  
Meets pleasure seekers all the way,  
In Mandarin rooms with music sweet,  
And foods and wines, much to repeat.  
He does not like this hotel life,  
His heart is with his home and wife.

Yet travel is a job he took,  
When at the Cross he all forsook,  
To serve the Master where He'd call  
All over this terrestrial ball.  
Lord, give me courage to follow  
Through valleys deep, through paths narrow.  
Nor wing, nor sail, can change the course  
Pilgrims of old have set for us!

Let every Gospel messenger  
Travel not as a passenger,  
Who lounges 'way the precious hours --  
Our journeying is not a tour!  
It is a race that must be won,  
With sweat and tears, under the sun,  
Till Heav'n above is reached at last,  
And at His feet our crowns are cast.

*I Corinthians 9:24-26; Revelation 4:10*

## **FOREWORD**

I have known Rev (Dr) Timothy Tow for over forty years as a colleague in our Lord's ministry, as a friend and true soldier of the Cross! He likes to say that he is Timothy and I am Paul in that order! But the opposite is the truth.

He is a faithful servant and prodigious worker in His vineyard. I am sure that he has planted more than forty churches up until now. And the fact is that they are all flourishing. Malaysia is dotted with Churches he established there. He has founded churches in Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Burma and a good number on Singapore itself. I think he has also contributed not a little to a church in the Holy Land.

More than that he was called to found the Far Eastern Bible College from which a stream of pastors have graduated to shepherd these churches. As if this was not enough, he has produced over a dozen books which would have been a life-time achievement by men of lesser mettle! All his family are high achievers in various fields of knowledge, to the glory of God.

*Paul A Contento*

## PREFACE

Of the making of books on church growth, the current hot topic among ecclesiastics and seminarians, there is no end. Why should this writer add to the list?

Having been involved in this very subject as pastor of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church and principal of Far Eastern Bible College, Singapore the last forty-three and thirty-one years, wherein the Lord of the Vineyard has prospered with one offshoot per year, we're constrained to share our experiences and insights for the mutual furtherance of the Gospel.

Another reason for presenting this treatise is the different viewpoint we hold from what is generally accepted as criterion of church growth. The church growth hitherto discussed seems to centre on "my church" or "our church." This writer sees church growth as not being linked merely to my church or our church, but rather to the Church of Jesus Christ everywhere. It is His Church. He adopts that true ecumenical spirit which is after Calvin, yea, even after J. Gresham Machen. According to Machen, he is willing to work with evangelical Arminians than with modernist Calvinists. Indeed, we are delighted to help build fundamental Baptist Churches in the Philippines than have anything to do with Bible-Presbyterians who "kept not their first estate."

This different viewpoint we hold from what is generally accepted as criterion of church growth is not derived gradually in the course of our work. It was our conviction from the very

beginning. Writing in the *Malaysia Christian Quarterly Vol I, No 1, Nov. 1951* we averred:

God's idea is quite the opposite. It is one of growing out, spreading out, giving out. His is not compartmental. His is universal. The Great Commission to preach the Gospel contains no clause to limit such effort by or for a particular group. The Gospel is to be broadcast far and wide without restriction, without condition. Freely the disciples have received, freely they must give. The apostle Paul set the Church the example. If he was to win souls for Christ he cared not a wee bit whether new converts would be a Pauline following. All he cared was that they should be united under Christ (I Corinthians 1:12-13). After ordaining elders to look after the flock, he left church matters entirely to the local congregation. In this way a church was placed on its own feet. This soon became the Antioch of a new work in its own hinterland. Therefore it is every Christian's bounden duty to cooperate with another faithfully preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The sooner this truth is received, the sooner will the Gospel be sped forward on wings ...

When we talk of church growth we must not adopt the attitude of only adding to size, height and number: Using the biggest Church in Korea and in the world with its unsound doctrine as an example brings rather adverse results. It scares us... The symbol of church growth is the mustard (Matthew 13:31,32) and not the mushroom.

From our viewpoint, we must consider every church sprouting beyond our shores, no matter how small, as one unit of growth (Isaiah 32:20). The founding of a Bible College adds another unit. The opening of a bookroom is considered yet another. The establishment of a mission station at Bukit Batu, a small village in Malaysia, is nonetheless. It should have the same status as the mother church that supports it, as the smallest nation has the same vote as the greatest in the United Nations. Church

growth must be measured horizontally, not vertically, in depth, not in height.

Church growth is not centralization but decentralization. The principle of decentralization is given in the division of the Promised Land to every Hebrew tribe and family in the Conquest of Canaan by the word of Moses (Numbers 33:54). The unconquered land was to be their further objective of acquisition by the word of Joshua (Joshua 23:4,5). This latter injunction is like the Olivet Commission (after the Great Commission) that exhorts us to go on from our Jerusalem to all Judea, Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8).

If this treatise on church growth will lead the would-be church planter to a new dimension of understanding what church growth is, our contributions will not have been made in vain. To God be the glory. Amen.

*Timothy Tow*

## INTRODUCTION

Are the Churches that are now growing by leaps and bounds a result of following the “scientific” methods as discovered by missiologists and church growth “experts”? Is Cho Yonggi’s biggest Church in the world the Mecca for all church growth enthusiasts? Where is the pattern for church growth to be found?

The pattern for church growth is right before our eyes, but we have missed the woods for the trees. The pattern for church growth is given by none other than Jesus Christ the Head of the Church before His ascension in what is known as the Great Commission. “And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:18-20).

This Great Commission is further expounded, insofar as its geographical progression is concerned, by what is known as the Olivet Commission, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in **all** Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

This pattern is carried out by none other than the Apostles, Peter to the Jews and Paul to the Gentiles. How they have worked out “their salvation” is commanded to be followed by us,

in any period of Church history, ancient or modern (Philippians 2:12). Not only are the writings and preachings of the Apostles infallible and inerrant (II Peter 3:16, I Thessalonians 2:13) but also their pattern of work. Paul says to the Corinthians, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (I Corinthians 11:1). Paul reiterates this several times, and he stresses it ever more strongly in his writing to the Romans against pretenders, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. But your ***obedience*** is come abroad to all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf...” (Romans 16:17-19). To the Philippians, he commands, “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly [Calvin adds by way of commentary, whose religion is their kitchen], and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things) (Philippians 3:17-19).

Yes, the Apostle Paul has set us the infallible, inerrant example of church planting and church growth in his missionary journeys. It is from him particularly we shall draw lessons for our day, and our attainments cannot be assessed but in the light of the Acts of the Apostles.

We shall now relate the observations we have made in the great work of the Church and our experiences in chronological order in certain areas, learning again as we retrace our steps.

## CHAPTER I

# THE POWER THAT IS FORGOTTEN

Oftentimes, when the Great Commission is quoted, the speaker will begin in its truncated form, “Go ye therefore ...” But the preamble, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” is unwittingly deleted. Without Divine power, no wonder church growth is so slow! All power, all authority, and it is by this authority that the Spirit descended at Pentecost, and great and mighty deeds were done for the founding of the Church of Jesus Christ.

I am of the generation who went through the Singapore Pentecost of 1935 when Dr John Sung visited the first time our Island-State. The impact of this Holy Ghost Revival is admitted by none other than Keith Hinton in his book, *Growing Churches, Singapore Style* page 21. He says of John Sung,

“Any discussion of the movement of people from China in the context of church growth must mention evangelist John Sung. This remarkable man visited Singapore seven times in 1935 and 1936, working through the network of links between churches in China and those in Singapore. No person has made a greater spiritual impact on the city than Sung in those brief, few-day visits. He not only won thousands to Christ but more significantly, he organized the converts into witness bands of three and sent them out into the streets, and he effectively challenged Christians to win the lost world to



*John Sung*



*Telok Ayer Church*

Christ. In his first visit alone there were 1,300 converts, and 111 evangelistic teams incorporating over 500 people were organized. He was no theologian, had many strange ideas and unusual mannerisms, and he irritated the orthodox (Lyall 1961:146-166). Yet throughout Singapore today one finds key Christian leaders and influential lay people who attribute not only their conversion but their model of devotion and commitment to service to the ministry of John Sung."

Through the John Sung Campaign, great revival came to many lethargic and sleepy churches in Singapore. That was church growth sent down from heaven by the outpoured power of the Holy Spirit. The results of the Singapore Pentecost were born of God. By contrast, the results of the Billy Graham and Luis Palau crusades were born chiefly of man. While Billy Graham and Luis Palau spent \$1 million and \$1.45 million respectively during one full year's advance preparation to bring in the crowds, John Sung spent not one single dollar in any kind of advertisement. Like Elijah he came, and like Elijah he went.

One confirmation of its permanence, like the good fruit a hundred-fold mentioned in Jesus' parable of the sower (Matthew 13:1-9, 23), is recorded by Edward Band in *Working His Purpose Out*, the History of the English Presbyterian Mission 1847-1947. On page 537 he says of the Singapore Pentecost,

"In 1935, the Chinese evangelist, Dr Sung, paid visits to Singapore. The result was a real revival of spiritual life and a new desire for Bible Study. Many of the ordinary church members engaged actively in voluntary evangelistic work, organising themselves in small groups which went out regularly to preach the Gospel. Attendance at church services increased to such an extent that several congregations were faced with the necessity of erecting larger church buildings. This evangelistic work brought new additions to the church membership. The number of adult baptisms during 1936 were 160 as compared with 38,

72 and 58 for the three preceding years. The statistics for 1936 showed a total of 19 congregations with a total membership of 1,362. (There were 5 ordained Chinese ministers and 12 unordained preachers.) A gratifying feature was the increase in Christian liberality, the total income of the church having increased from 2,207 dollars in 1902 to 31,225 dollars in 1936."

A first impression of church growth in Singapore as a result of John Sung's campaigns is the number of souls saved, the number of witness bands formed, the number of increased baptisms, etc. As one who was mightily blessed throughout the campaigns, so that I had intimate knowledge of other results not usually mentioned, let me add to all these accounts three other aspects of church growth.

1. New churches were formed as a result of the revival. In far off Lim Chu Kang and at Bukit Panjang, where the preaching bands would regularly evangelise, there had sprung up two churches in these two rural localities in a few short years. What deserves to be mentioned especially is the instant church that came into being in the compound house of Mr Phoa Hock Seng, whose wife is still living today to confirm my statement.

Mr Phoa was an Anglican and teacher by profession. He had a family of five children whom he brought to the meetings, riding on a small lorry together with friends from the Pasir Panjang neighbourhood to Telok Ayer Methodist Church where the campaign was held. Now, at the end of the campaign Dr John Sung appealed for full-time consecrators. There were 85 old and young, among whom were Mr and Mrs Phoa and I, though only 15, was not the least. Having given themselves wholly to the Lord the Phoas instantaneously turned their big bungalow house into a Church, himself the lay preacher in charge. This bright witness which continued on after WWII attracted Ivy (now my wife) and her family to the Pasir Panjang Christ Church. Phoa Hock Seng was ordained a minister by Bishop D.A. Thompson of



*This is Mr Phoa's house which was turned into a Church immediately after the John Sung Revival, 1935. Today it continues as Nazareth B-P Church.*



*Chin Lien Seminary*

the Reformed Episcopal Church of England in 1956 under the auspices of the International Council of Christian Churches. From this account we see how when the Holy Spirit power is outpoured on God's children, churches are instantaneously born! Like the Jerusalem Church at Pentecost.

2. The seed of future pastors and evangelists is also germinated so that of the 85 full-time consecrators, I can count easily over a score who have become faithful pastors or evangelists in the years that followed. Peter Yap, interpreter for the Billy Graham Crusade 1978, is one. He was my colleague in the weekly evangelistic outreaches in 1935-36. We took part in street meetings and visited hospitals, speaking to patients one by one. Later he became a school teacher. He was a prominent elder of Bethesda, a lay preacher and outgoing evangelist to Malaysia and Indonesia.

Here is Elder Peter Yap's testimony in *Asian Awakening*, p.101,

"One of the most significant events in my life occurred when I was fourteen and studying in Tao Nan School. From 30 August to 12 September 1935, the Chinese Inter-Church Union conducted a series of revival meetings at the Telok Ayer Chinese Methodist Church. The speaker was Dr. John Sung, a faithful servant of the Lord from mainland China.

On the first night, Dr Sung preached on the need to be born again. He spoke with great zest and power. I felt as though he directed every word at me. I realised that Jesus died for me on the cross. He shed His precious blood to deliver me from so great a peril as eternal damnation. I realised what a wretched sinner I was. As I pondered over these truths, I was moved to tears. At that moment, the Holy Spirit began His good work, convicting me of my sins and enabling me to confess and accept Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour. It was a touching experience.

All the pastors on the stage and the congregation repented of their sins, each one accepting Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour. Dr Sung taught us a prayer of repentance and we confessed our sins specifically before the Lord. Then he prayed for us and committed us to the Lord. On that very night I was born again. Praise the Lord!

Over the two-week period, Dr Sung spoke three times daily, at 9.00 am, 2.00 pm and 7.30 pm. At every meeting, the hall was packed to capacity. It was marvellous to see such a large crowd listening attentively to the Word of God. It was as though the congregation were sitting at the feet of Jesus receiving wonderful portions from Him. The Holy Spirit continued His marvellous work and the number of those saved multiplied daily. As it was during school vacation, I attended all the three meetings daily and was spiritually enriched. This series of meetings also brought great revival to all the churches in Singapore.

Dr John Sung guided us to form the Singapore Christian Evangelistic Band. Altogether more than one hundred teams went out eagerly to proclaim the gospel throughout Singapore. My late father was the leader of Team 7. The other members of this team were cousin Chin Choon, my younger brother Huat San and me. We preached and witnessed for the Lord along Telok Ayer Street and Amoy Street. Before the revival meetings concluded, Dr Sung appealed to the believers to dedicate their lives to the Lord. Moved by the Holy Spirit, I decided to dedicate my life for His service. A total of one hundred and twenty persons did likewise that evening.

The churches in Singapore were greatly blessed by these revival meetings. The tremendous effects could be broadly summarised as follows:

1. Most believers clearly understood the significance of rebirth.

2. The believers were encouraged to preach the Gospel and witness for the Lord.
3. All the Christians were urged to lead prayerful lives and to read the Bible regularly.
4. There was evidence of a great revival in Singapore.

Wherever Dr Sung went, he brought forth good fruits. Some of his fruits still remain today. Rev Quek Kiok Chiang, Rev Timothy Tow, Dr Tow Siang Hwa, Mr Lim Kim Seng and I were saved at that time. For the past fifty years all these brothers and many others have served the Lord faithfully and unflinchingly.”

3. The third eminently forgotten factor of church growth is the founding of Chin Lien Bible School by Miss Leona Wu and Miss Ng Peck Loan in 1937, two years after John Sung's first visit. Many who were now born again desired the sincere milk of the Word (I Peter 2:2). With a great conviction sent from the Lord, Miss Wu established Chin Lien with support from nowhere but from the Hand of the Almighty. After 56 years Chin Lien Bible Seminary has graduated several hundred, both women and men, and God knows the number of churches that have come into being through their endeavours.

Here is one example of two Chin Lien graduates' contribution to church growth. A first convert of John Sung, Madam Ang Soo Hwa, after graduating from Chin Lien, entered interior Malaya, to Raub and Bentong in Pahang State. There she single-handedly built two handsome little churches which she and a fellow Chin Lien graduate ministered. The importance of Bible schools in relation to church growth is hereby manifested. And, all by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, without which church growth statistics will not last!

The pattern of teaching an intensive Bible School of shorter duration, however, is set forth by St Paul in Ephesus at the school

of one Tyrannus. “And he continued by the space of two years: so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:10).

From Paul’s intensive two-year Bible School whereby “all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks,” did you notice, when reading Revelation 1:11 that five new churches had sprung in the same region? Of the seven Churches of Asia to whom John was told to write by our Lord, take note that Ephesus and Laodicea (Colossians 4:16) are the only two mentioned outside of the Book of Revelation. The rest, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia are evidently the result of Paul’s teaching ministry in Ephesus. And with the Church in Philadelphia blessed with an open door by Him who opens it with the key of David, how many more new churches would come alive is beyond our imagination!

At the height of the John Sung Revival, the indefatigable evangelist called for a one-month Bible Institute to be convened at Kulangsu, Amoy (Xiamen), Fukien Province, South China, July 10 to August 9, 1936. In a “*Biblathon*” lasting 30 days during which Dr Sung taught the Word two times a day at three-and-a-half hours per session, he went through 1189 chapters of the Bible, from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21. Dr Paul E. Kauffmann of Asian Outreach acknowledged this spiritual marathon was unheard of in all of church history. From all over China and Southeast Asia 1,600 participants, plus 400 locals, were gathered. When the seed of the Word was sown in the hearts of leaders of the Church and of the Preaching Bands, were these not become the lively seed of God’s children scattered to the uttermost part of the earth? This lively seed of God’s children (Matthew 13:38) were surely instrumental in the saving of thousands of others after John Sung’s death (1944), and the more during Mao’s oppressive rule when the true Church went underground (1949). China watchers estimate there are at least 50 million Christians in continental China today when Protestants

numbered only one million in 1949 (Leslie Lyall). The latest figure according to a paragraph in the Missions Banner of Presbyterian Missionary Union, USA, February 1993, is 63 million! This statistic is confirmed by *Focus on China*, a new Asian publication. But, I am not wrong in saying John Sung's part in the Asian Awakening in the thirties had been used of God to bring forth 30, 60 and 100-fold in the generation after him, in the sprouting of thousands of underground churches where the faithful still meet. According to Sung's own testimony in his homilies, several hundred thousand souls were saved in his 15 years of relentless campaigns. That the name of John Sung is on many an oldster's lips in China's underground today is confirmed by Rev Yap Beng Shin, one of our Bible-Presbyterian ministers and Far Eastern Bible College graduate. He has visited China on ten occasions for the Gospel's sake.

One secret of church growth is to implant the seed of the Word in the hearts of God's children that they might become the lively seed to be further sown among the children of the world. This John Sung had accomplished through his month-long Bible Institute held at Amoy, and through several fortnight-long institutes in other parts of China, such as Foochow and Hangchow. In our day, the running of long-term Bible Schools and Colleges, according to Paul's injunction to Timothy, is the pattern (II Timothy 2:2). For the benefit of charismatics it is to be noted in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon John Sung's campaigns and institutes, no tongues were ever spoken. John Sung himself taught against the speaking of tongues! Amen.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **IT BEGINS WITH A MAN**

Although I am of the generation that went through the Singapore Pentecost of 1935 and gave myself to full-time service, I must not forget the call I had received first from my mother's womb (Galatians 1:15). At the early age of seven or eight, Mother told me of her vow on me before I was born and of Grandpa's prayer of consecration after birth.

I am also of the generation that went through the Great Depression (we called it Slump) of 1929-30. I lived with my sister and brothers at Grandpa's, at the English Presbyterian Mission Church, Upper Serangoon, in order to go to school in Singapore while Dad and Mum were holed up in a rubber estate in Senai, Johore, Malaysia. As Grandpa's stipend received from the E.P. Mission was only \$30 a month, in my sweet conversation with Mother alone one day, I despaired of such meagre pay for a pastor, so that Mother's desire for me to be one seemed gloomy. Mother looked grave yet serene. Then she said, "If you study to be a pastor when you grow up, I will send you to America." Mother's ambition was I should become an undershepherd of the flock like Grandpa, yea, even like Great-grandfather, the first ordained minister of Swatow, our hometown, 1882.

When the Lord called me a third time, that is, in 1946 when I was about to set sail for London to study law, and he confronted me at that time with the sudden death of Mother and Baby Lilyn

within five weeks, I turned from law in London to Theology in Nanking. He changed my course from sailing like Jonah to Tarshish westwards to heading eastwards. Now I realized I must study, and study very hard I must, if I was to become a pastor. Accordingly we left good old Singapore for China, but from Nanking the Lord led me to the United States. When the cargo boat that transported me to the New World was approaching New York, and I heard on the radio, "This is VOA, the Voice of America," Mother's prophetic word on my "studying to be a pastor in America" came alive! "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). "The son of a praying mother cannot be lost."

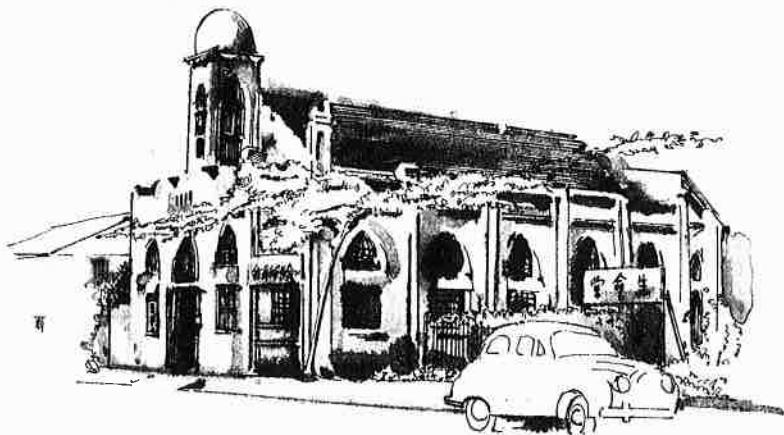
The training I had received from Faith Theological Seminary, Reformed and Premillennial, which in the words of my teacher Dr R. L. Harris is as near to the truth as can be, has stood me well these forty-three years. Another doctrine we received is separation from the unbelief of liberal teachings and from the unholy entanglements of Ecumenism. I joined the 20th Century Reformation of the International Council of Christian Churches founded by Dr Carl McIntire in opposition to the Ecumenism of the World Council of Churches. This standing up for Jesus Christ away from compromise is one reason for God's blessing the Bible-Presbyterian Church Movement to this day, though there are some splinters in the course of years. When we came out from among them, we also came home to the Father Almighty, for we are His sons and daughters. The price for separation is more than adequately repaid by His paternal love (II Corinthians 6:14-18).

No sooner had I graduated from Seminary, 1950, than a call was received from Say Mia Tng (生命堂), my home church that is Teochew-speaking. Through the good offices of Elder Quek Kiok Chiang I was ordained in Geneva, Switzerland, 1950, by the Philadelphia Presbytery of the Bible-Presbyterian Church USA

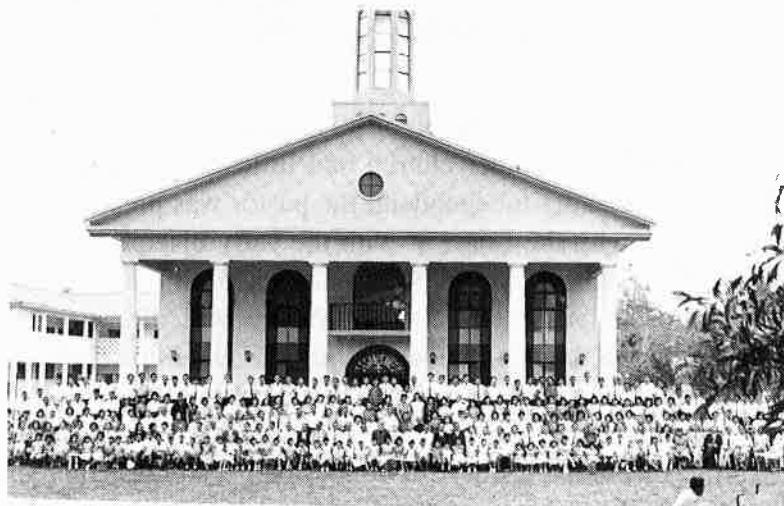
during the Second Congress of the ICCC. When I returned to Singapore and became Pastor of the English Service of Life (Teochew) Church, I had the closest cooperation and support from my brother Quek. This reminds of the Lord's blessing on those who serve Him faithfully and loyally, for one shall chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight (Deuteronomy 32:30). Unity is strength, brotherly love according to David in Psalm 133 is overpowering strength. It is as the dew of Hermon upon the mountains of Zion, which causes the parched grounds to spring into life. This is revival. This is reviving power for church growth!

To be a pastor is not taking on a profession, much less a vacation, but a vocation. To become a pastor one must be prepared for every eventuality. Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Matthew 16:24-26). While Shakespeare says he who is afraid to die, dies a hundred times, Jesus says he who is not afraid to die lives all the time.

As the young congregation of 30 English-speaking members transferred from the mother church had little strength, and yet it chose to be financially independent, the pastor was prepared to go the whole way with the Lord, as with the early disciples. And in the spirit of St Paul, he would put no burden at all on the embryo church (I Corinthians 9:11-12). All the freewill offerings from the collections on the Lord's Day, from both worship service and Sunday School would be his salary. The first month's collections amounted to \$110. The pastor received this reverently and thankfully as from the Lord. But in no time his pay was increased to \$200. By 1958 he was drawing \$350. But the Lord also supplied him with an honorarium of \$100 for teaching at Chin Lien Bible School. With his wife's pay from her job as a



*The Old Life Church at Prinsep Street*



*The new Life Church at Gilstead Road, inaugurated 1963*

Government midwife, the pastor's growing family could live frugally, happily.

For transportation in the pastoral ministry, wherein the young pastor visited everyone of his members in those days, even when it grew to 200, he found the speediest and most economical means was by riding a BSA racing bicycle costing \$165, a gift from a sister. This was jogging on wheels which kept the Lord's servant fit as a fiddle.

For housing, which was a most acute problem after WWII, the Lord wonderfully caused the European manager of the SIT (Singapore Improvement Trust), forerunner of HDB (Housing & Development Board) to let him have a three-room flat in Tiong Bahru. (In 1950 there was a queue of 50,000 applying for Government housing.) Through a phone conversation with Mr Carter the manager by which I was favourably received, the Lord enabled me "to run through a troop and leap over a wall" (Psalm 18:29). The three-room flat at 10A Kim Pong Road became not only the young pastor's residence but also the office of Life Church English Service for the next twelve years until the English congregation found a new home at Gilstead Road in 1962.

### **Pattern from Peter the Pastor**

The title of this chapter is "It Begins With A Man." This man that is to lead the Church, that it may grow from strength to strength for the extension of God's Kingdom on earth is the pastor. For a pattern, let us go to Peter, chief apostle and pastor commissioned by our Lord on the shore of Galilee (John 21).

Before our Lord ascended to heaven He specially commissioned Peter to pastor His flock. By the Sea of Galilee He said to him, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep, feed my sheep." This pastoral charge Peter passed on to his successors in I Peter 5:1-6, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an

elder (not pope) ... Feed the flock of God ... Neither being lords ... but ensamples to the flock ... Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea all of you be subject one to another and be clothed with humility..."

This exhortation reemphasises the importance of the pastor being a pattern and not a power over the congregation. Therefore Peter continues, "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." The pastor can gain respect from his people by the lowly way, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." This exposition on the pastoral ministry applies also to elders, deacons, the Sunday School Superintendent, the heads of all our Fellowships. Everyone of you has a pastoral duty to the group you lead. Your pastor is deeply indebted to each one of you for your assistance.

Some congregational type of Church government makes the pastor merely an employee, not the head of the Church. In earlier years the pastor of a Chinese Church especially was treated like an amah (domestic servant) which John Sung soundly condemned. Hence the many disharmonies and the short term ministers. Some restrict their pastor's movement, forbidding him to travel abroad beyond his "annual leave" of how many precious days! But the pastor is the first Missionary of the Church. Peter travelled no less than Paul. Nor did he build a Church with half million congregation vying with today's Church growth contenders. He preached in Jerusalem, all Judea and went with John to Samaria (sent by other apostles, Acts 8:9-14) and thence to the uttermost part of the earth. In I Peter 1:1 the countries he visited by name are Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. In 5:13 he adds Babylon, which some think was a cryptic name for Rome (The Concise Oxford Dictionary). But the tradition of the Eastern Churches is united that he did indeed go to Babylon, from which he wrote his first epistle. In I Corinthians 9:15 Paul indicates that Peter had visited Corinth with his wife. And Paul's mention in Chapter 1:12 of there being a Cephas party

in the Corinthian Church shows Peter had ministered the Word in Corinth. Tradition tells of his death, crucified upside down in Rome.

One reason why God has blessed Life Church is their giving the pastor free movement to preach wherever he is called. Her pastor has answered the call to preach abroad on countless occasions. India alone had claimed him nine times, and Australia no less not to mention the perennial frequent visits to Malaysia and Indonesia from the early beginning. The Church that sends the pastor in missions outreach is the Divine pattern of a Missionary Society. The Missionary Society comes into being when the Church ceases to be a Missionary Society! The Missionary Society comes into being when the Church has no more missionary-pastor.

*Lord, Thou hast giv'n to me a trust  
A high and holy dispensation,  
To tell the world, and tell I must  
The story of Thy great salvation;  
Thou might'st have sent from heav'n above  
Angelic hosts to tell the story,  
But in thy condescending love,  
On men Thou hast conferred the glory.*

*Let me be faithful to my trust,  
Telling the world the story.  
Press on my heart the woe,  
Put in my feet the go;  
Let me be faithful to my trust,  
And use me for Thy glory.*

- Robert Glover

The pastor is also Evangelist. Did not Peter win 3000 souls in one day? In 1960 the pastor of Life Church was called to preach in Korea for 25 days during which he delivered 52 sermons. At Taegu Townhall where over a thousand gathered they advertised him as Billy Graham of Southeast Asia. With the fervent transmission of his message by a zealous Korean interpreter from his Mandarin into Korean, that night over 100 raised their hands to receive the Lord Jesus Christ. The pastor should cultivate the gift of an evangelist. Every message the pastor gives must have the evangelistic emphasis. Are you saved? Born again? The pastor delights to see younger men arise, preaching at Fellowship Gospel Meetings. The pattern is traced to Stephen and Philip, two of the first seven chosen deacons (Acts 6:5). These first deacons were evangelists.

The pastor is also Baptiser. Peter had the 3000 baptised. When Cornelius and his house believed, he baptised them before leaving. By baptism a local church is formed. Calvin says, "A church is constituted when the Word of God is regularly preached, and the sacraments administered." Without baptism no visible Church can be found! This key given the pastor has added power to his ministry. While baptism per se does not save, it exerts a mysterious power over the heathen.

After I had baptised a family of six including a boy of seven, the Grandma of the house who remained unconverted offered her daily incense to the God of Heaven (天公), literally Heavenly Grandfather, herself. Before this she would ask her seven-year-old grandson to hold the joss sticks. As soon as he was baptised, she refrained from this practice. She said, "Since my grandson is baptised, he is become Jesus' son. I cannot touch him." Why was the youngest grandson asked to offer incense? According to the old lady's thinking, he being the youngest, was purest, so most effectual in this service.

Another instance of the power of baptism over the heathen is reflected in a funeral I was asked to conduct for a sister B-P Church. The deceased had drowned at a seaside picnic. His belongings, particularly private documents, were searched as a matter of course. To the horror of his unconverted heathen family members, there were the photos of his recent baptism!

Since he was baptised, they could not bury him without his pastor and since his pastor was on leave, I, as supervisory pastor, was called. When I arrived at the house of the bereaved, I was surprised to see all the idols and incense altars in the house securely draped over with red silk. (Red is the sign of life and good fortune in Chinese lore.) The gods had to be shielded from the pastor, the Jesus man.

My baptism stories are many. Suffice it to relate this testimony of a converted medium assistant. In their practice of enchantments, they would be on guard against beef-eaters and baptised Christians. Why beef-eaters? The ox is the Big Bread Winner of the Chinese family (in olden farming days). To eat his meat is, as New Age agitators would want us believe, to commit murder. So there is a taboo to the enchanter! Why is a baptised Christian also taboo? You have the answer from the first two accounts!

In the light of my baptism anecdotes, you will agree that para-church organisations are limited in the Lord's ministry. Church growth is fastest when all the four injunctions in the Great Commission are carried out, like fixing up the four wheels of a car! The fourth point is expounded in the next paragraph.

Finally, the pastor is Theologian. Though Peter wrote only two Epistles totalling eight chapters, his theology covers plenty of ground. The Inspiration of Scripture, Soteriology, Eschatology, etc. etc. The Sunday School of our Church is where every member should attend, old or young. The Monday and Thursday

evening classes of Far Eastern Bible College have been on the last 31 years without a break. Last but not least, the College proper, giving courses leading to Bachelor of Theology and Master of Divinity has been abundantly blessed of God, under the pastor's leadership. The pastor should re-produce pastors and in order to do so he must know his Theology well. He is a Bible student without ceasing all his life. This is church growth by geometric progression!

These are the four great emphases of the Great Commission, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19,20). Peter faithfully carried out his pastoral commission under these four injunctions, and we should do the same. So will we receive power and be attended with His presence in the work of the Lord. From church growth to church growth!

## **Paul's Mandate to Timothy**

However, there is a denomination of churches, or individual churches, of the Brethren persuasion that believe in being taught of God, and not of men. They do not trust the training received from human teachers in a Bible College or theological seminary. We agree with them if such Bible College or Seminary is modernist and liberal, who like the Jewish teachers, the scribes and Pharisees, are blind guides (Matthew 15:14). (I read once in the Straits Times that the Dean of the Faculty of Theology of a university in England was an atheist. To put it in medical terms, the professor of eye-surgery was a blind man.) Indeed, the number of sound Bible Colleges and Seminaries are dwindling as

the Apostacy darkens with the last days in which we live. They can be counted on the fingers.

Nevertheless, there is a mandate given of God through Paul to Timothy his son in the faith: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2). There is such a ministry as a Bible College, a faithful Fundamental Bible College, where pastors and evangelists are trained for the growth of the church, for the extension of His Kingdom. (We will show examples from graduates of our Bible College.) Without proper Bible training, the Church that relies on self-taught evangelists or missionaries will be stifled in growth inasmuch as the tether of their theological knowledge is short and the ability of their preaching skills is limited.

Leaders who are taught not by men but by the Lord only are few, as the Chinese saying goes, rare like the Morning Star. When will God send another John Sung? Another man (taught) of God? Since such men are sent "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Ephesians 1:11), and are few and far in between, we must be content to the role of the pastor, properly trained from a Spirit-filled Bible Institution. "And yet shew I you a more excellent way" (I Corinthians 12:31).

## The Pastor's Helpmeet

Inasmuch as men solely taught of God, not of men, are rare like the Morning Star, St Paul is at the head of the list, he is also unique in being single throughout his service of the Lord. This suited the nature of his relentless ministry as the vanguard of the new Christian movement sweeping through a heathenistic world now prepared for the Gospel seed. A modern St Paul who ranged from South to North China into Manchuria single-handedly is

William Chalmers Burns, whom Bible-Presbyterians today acknowledge to be their spiritual ancestor.

While Paul remained single for the Gospel's sake (Matthew 19:12), some think he was a widower, he respected his colleague Peter in being accompanied by his wife, and not only Peter, but other apostles also, in their respective ministries (I Corinthians 9:5). In fact, Paul instructs Timothy in the matter of installing a bishop (elder, pastor) to require such to be blamelessly married (I Timothy 3:2) as of first importance. Thus, it has become a standing rule in the Bible-Presbyterian Church not to ordain a man until he is settled down. For, as the Chinese saying goes, when they congratulate a man at his wedding, "he is a family man, he is now established." In the ministry over the flock, a pastor is ten-fold enhanced in his work when he has a good helpmeet. (This is in contradistinction to the Popish system of imposing celibacy on the clergy.)

Marriage is ordained of God. The first couple was married in Paradise (Garden of Eden) where no sin was, and God Himself solemnised the ceremony. Thus the Apostle to the Hebrews declares, "Marriage is honourable in all and the bed undefiled" (Hebrews 13:4).

Marriage is a multi-mysterious mystery. For some, it comes too suddenly like an unexpected arrow in what is called love at first sight. That happened to Boaz. Read the following account and it will thrill you to know how love for Ruth opened like a flower in bloom in the kinsman's heart.

And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee. Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this? And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab: And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers

among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house. Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens: Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn. Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger? And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens. And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not: And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not. (Ruth 2:4-16)

And if you want to know how the romance came to full bloom read the remaining chapters!

Marriage is a multi-mysterious mystery. For others, it could be a far-searching expedition as in the case of Abraham's son Isaac. This is more so for a single woman, standing forlorn

against the river of time, ever rolling on. Perhaps, it is not God's will for you to marry (Read I Corinthians 7:7,8). Hail to the single women missionaries serving in many a lonely outpost where men have feared to advance.

"But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn" (I Corinthians 7:9). But if no life partner is forthcoming, what is the solution? We do not recommend starting a marriage bureau in the church. But we have innumerable fellowships by age groups in Life Church, from Young Teens to Youth Fellowship, to Young Adults Fellowship and Adults Fellowship. Nevertheless, let the younger Lifers join these age-groups because they have God uppermost in their heart: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). The classic example of a devout heart given unto God which is rewarded doubly in holy matrimony is Ruth. Coming to church regularly to worship God is the condition for additional blessing from His hand, to fulfill the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4). And, "whoso find a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour from the Lord" (Proverbs 18:22).

Let me discuss this most important question from my own experience. After Nancy Lan Yin was taken home by the Lord in a motor accident at the foot of Cameron Highlands in 1965, I began to receive phone calls from members and friends of the opposite sex. At first I did not catch the significance of such attention. Jehovah Jireh. He had one prepared to take Nancy's place without my knowing it, like the ram caught in the thicket on Mount Moriah.

I had a question put to me innocently when Ivy entered FEBC: "Pastor, what can a girl like me do after I graduate from this College?" Answered I, "Well, if you do your duties properly, mopping the floor and polishing the Church furniture, God will

use you in time to come." How did I know I was to marry her one year and four months after Nancy's death?

Indeed, the supportive role of a pastor's wife in the matter of Church growth cannot be overemphasized. That one shall chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight applies particularly, from my experience, to the man-and-wife combination. As a pastor has to minister to more of the womenfolk than men in the church (it seems every church has more women than men), he will not be at ease in his church work without being "harnessed" (to say it sheepishly)!

But his wife should be similarly called to full-time service. If not, she should be heart and soul for her husband's vocation and be willing to go with him in great and in small, through thick and thin. Fortunately for me, there is a full helpmeet in Ivy so that I am not only well taken care of in my daily necessities but also spiritually supported in my external work. Thus, whenever I travel there is her accompanying instant help for my needs, the more, in the changing circumstances away from home.

As the running of the day to day business and livelihood of Far Eastern Bible College needs the closest attention and utmost devotion, who could have shouldered this responsibility apart from the principal's wife? Numerous cooks and kitchen helps have been employed, but finally the solution is one who serves not for pay, but for love of the Lord and his flock, with a motherly attention. And that one is the principal's helpmate by God's grace.

Apart from the College duties, as pastor's wife, she is his PRO with ladies and girls when they come to the parsonage for help. A lover of children she has taken upon herself to train a children's choir and leads them in regular Sunday worship. She is wise not to boss around over the ladies of the Church, but stands unobtrusively in the shadows. In playing second fiddle she adds that softer strain that harmonises more beautifully with the tune

her husband sings (夫唱妇隨) in the performance of the Lord's work. She is an integral part of the growth of the church. After all that is said, she is also the perennial teacher of Elementary New Testament Greek, having learnt it well under Dr John Grauley, missionary teacher from the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, USA.

A pastor having married will necessarily beget children. It is best to let nature take its course, though modern science has given man to limit birth for economic reasons. Nevertheless let the firstfruits be reaped in the strength of youth, for children are a stabilising factor of the family. "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth" (Psalm 127:3,4).

A pastor's wife has a greater duty than all other wives to bring up godly children. Everything that the pastor does is expected to be the paragon of the church. If the pastor's wife has a job outside, it is my humble opinion that she resign from it. Her family is her first job and the supplementary role she plays to the pastor in the multifarious functions in the church is her second job. In the generation before us, I never heard of a pastor's wife going to work in an office or taking some other outside work. A pastor's wife, however, can take on some church work such as teaching kindergarten. This is good economic arrangement. Having more time on hand to bring up children in the fear of the Lord, we believe this will lead to bringing up a godly family to God's glory.

Though the pastor's wife is his better half and there is no veil of secrecy that separates the two, for they are one flesh, yet in the service of God, the pastor must adhere strictly to his "professional" trust. He is a counsellor to his flock. What is confided in him by his sheep and lambs cannot be divulged. There is a Chinese saying, "When a word is uttered, even four

horses cannot retrieve it.” What folly then to say to one you should not confide, even the pastor’s wife, “Only you I tell this secret. Keep it to yourself.” An uttered secret is no more secret. There is an English saying, “Pitchers have ears, and there are many servants.”

When God has a word to His servant to be carried out, let it be consummated at the earliest moment. Neither let him tell his wife when he says “good-bye” before going on his mission. Thus when Abraham was told to bring Isaac to Mount Moriah for sacrifice, the old man said not a word to Sarah. A wife is a wonderful support to her husband. In this case it could be a grave hindrance.

In giving to the Lord, “let not thy left hand know what thy right had doeth” (Matthew 6:3). If the wife tends to be a stumbling block to the husband’s giving, then let them keep separate accounts. This will save unnecessary bickering. Wonderful it is where the wife instead of diminishing the husband’s giving will rather add to it. What a Priscilla is found for an Aquila!

*Who can find a virtuous woman?*

*For her price is above rubies...*

*Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain:*

*But a woman that feareth the Lord,*

*She shall be praised.*

*(Proverbs 31:10,30)*

## CHAPTER III

### GOSPEL ON THE GO

The four-fold injunction of our Lord in the carrying out of the Great Commission delivered to the early disciples is the same handed down to us today, and so until He returns. The Great Commission is an **Unchanging Commission**. The Great Commission is an Unfinished Commission. The Great Commission is the First Commandment to the Church.

In the Introduction of his masterpiece, *The Search for the Twelve Apostles*, Dr William Steuart McBirnie comments on the motivations of the Apostles:

One great truth about the Apostles is unassailable. It has been strengthened by every bit of tradition and history we have studied. That is, most of the Apostles took seriously the great commission of Jesus (as recorded in Matthew 28) and went forth to “Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the world” to evangelize the nations with the Christian gospel. The story of the Apostles is thus mainly the story of evangelism in the early church. They set an example for all subsequent Christians that is clear, unmistakable and unwavering. They challenged commoners and kings alike. They did not become salaried ecclesiastics but often worked with their hands to support themselves, so that by any and all means they might share the good news in Jesus. Most, like St. Paul, sought to preach Christ, “not building upon other men’s foundations, but going to the regions beyond.

The lives of the Apostles, especially that of St. Paul, reveal an unusual and brilliant concept of missionary strategy. They always went first to the great cities located on the trade routes. From these centers their disciples and converts then traveled out to the towns beyond and there established churches which in turn established still others. The Apostles knew the secret of strategic locations and of delegating responsibility to others, thus multiplying themselves more rapidly than is the case in many modern missionary enterprises. (*This is what we call decentralisation, not centralisation.*)

Above all, they founded *congregations*. Some modern day evangelism is so apart from the churches that the churches must feed the evangelistic effort, rather than for the evangelistic effort to build the converts firmly into the churches or to give impetus to new churches. This was never the Apostolic principle, which is why Apostolic evangelism lasted and some modern “populist” evangelism soon passes away.

The Apostles enjoined upon their converts the responsibility to become the church. Surely this is one lesson that needs to be re-learned today. It was St. Paul who wrote, *Jesus loved the church and gave himself for it!* (Ephesians 5:25). ”

Take note that Missions is No. 1. The Acts of the Apostles, while recording the Founding of the Church at Pentecost as a great event, highlights the missionary movement that constitutes the Apostles’ Acts throughout. As an Egyptian Presbyterian pastor I had met at a Conference of the International Council of Christian Churches observed, “The Gospel is no Gospel until it comes into motion. Put the GO to the Gospel and put the Gospel in the GO,” he said. Yes, indeed. The word “Gospel” is spelled, beginning with “Go.”

After I became pastor of the little English Life Church, I realised a pastor’s ministry was not confined to the four walls of

# *Malaysia Pioneer Mission*

## **PREACHING IN THE NEW VILLAGES**



his church. He had plenty of time on hand, seven days of 168 hours in the week. After preaching once every Lord's Day, teaching twice a week at Chin Lien Bible School, visiting members, holding prayer meetings, and family worship services, he still found plenty of time, on hand. That was my experience, and I could not feel at ease in what I'd call pious loafing. I believe in William Chalmers Burns my spiritual ancestor, for he was the first missionary that brought the Gospel to our great-grandparents in China in 1856. William Burns had this earnest characteristic. When holding a sweet conversation with colleagues, and this dragged on unnecessarily, he would excuse himself from the group, "Pardon me, I must run!" If a minister treasures his hours, yea, even the precious minutes, he will find time to do many other things for God. Missions, the Gospel on the go, is first priority.

With the words of the Great Commission ringing in his ears, like a distant clarion call, he decided with a comrade and deacon of Life Church, viz., Deacon Hsu Chiang Tai, to evangelise Malaya all the way from Johore Bahru to inland Pahang, and to Alor Star in the North, along the West Coast Highway. This was 1951, seven months after he was installed pastor.

Here is a reproduction of the *First Missionary Journey* we took as printed in the Malaysia Christian Jun-Sept 1952 issue:

On May 10th 1951 Brother Hsu and I were sent by the brethren of Malaysia Pioneer Mission (founded March 1951, being the missionary arm of little Life Church English Service) on a first missionary journey to the new villages in Interior Malaya.

We had no definite schedule for the itinerary, except that we should spend some time around Raub in Pahang. We travelled between curfew hours (Malaya was at war with the Communist "bandits"), that is when the day was bright, preaching as we went. We stopped at night by a church, or at a worthy brother's house (Matthew 10:11).

Such providential care as was promised by our Lord to His disciples, we found to be economical to our purse and refreshing to our spirits. The hospitality and fellowship we received from Christians became our energy for another day.

Our journey to and fro covered 1,000 miles in eight days. Twenty villages in the jungles were contacted. Crowds that gathered to hear us averaged 150, but thanks to "Mike" our voice was audible to a good many indoors. 1,500 New Testament portions donated by the Bible Society, with five times as many tracts were distributed.

According to our original inclination, we spent most of our time in Pahang. We have discovered in this inland State a white harvest field. The gate to every new village is symbolic of an effectual open door (I Corinthians 16:9) to a bumper crop. Farmers and rubber tappers who lived isolated, here a hut, there a hut, are now closely settled together behind barbed-wire protection. This providential concentration of souls together affords us a golden opportunity to preach the Gospel.

A blind woman whom we visited with Madam Ang the ladyminister of Raub told us her conversion story. Some time before the resettlement orders, she had given up Kuan Yin the Chinese Goddess of Mercy. The reason was she was too stingy to pay her temple dues. By God's grace, she began to look for another protector. She concluded by her inner reasonings that the God that looked after her could not be a hand-made idol. When she was resettled in this village Madam Ang "rang her doorbell," and upon a first presentation of the Redemption Story to her, she readily believed in the Lord. Her faith bore fruit thereafter. Her daughter was also converted. "I am not afraid of thieves or demons. I always pray to Jesus," she exclaimed fervidly. We had no doubt but that she was one ordained to be saved (Acts 13:48). This encouraged our hearts to greater missionary efforts.

I am sure many others, such as are ordained to be saved as this little blind woman, are sitting in darkness. They are awaiting our arrival with the good news to open their eyes and ears. They will believe readily as the blind woman. This is encouragement for pioneer preaching. Whether it be plain sailing or rough weather, the Master's command is: To every creature, to all nations! How shall we escape responsibility if we neglect so clear a command?

The Kingdom of God is at hand. When the trumpet of God shall sound to take us up, what will we bring for our Lord? We should do our best now for Him, then we will not regret.

*Only one life 'twill soon be past*

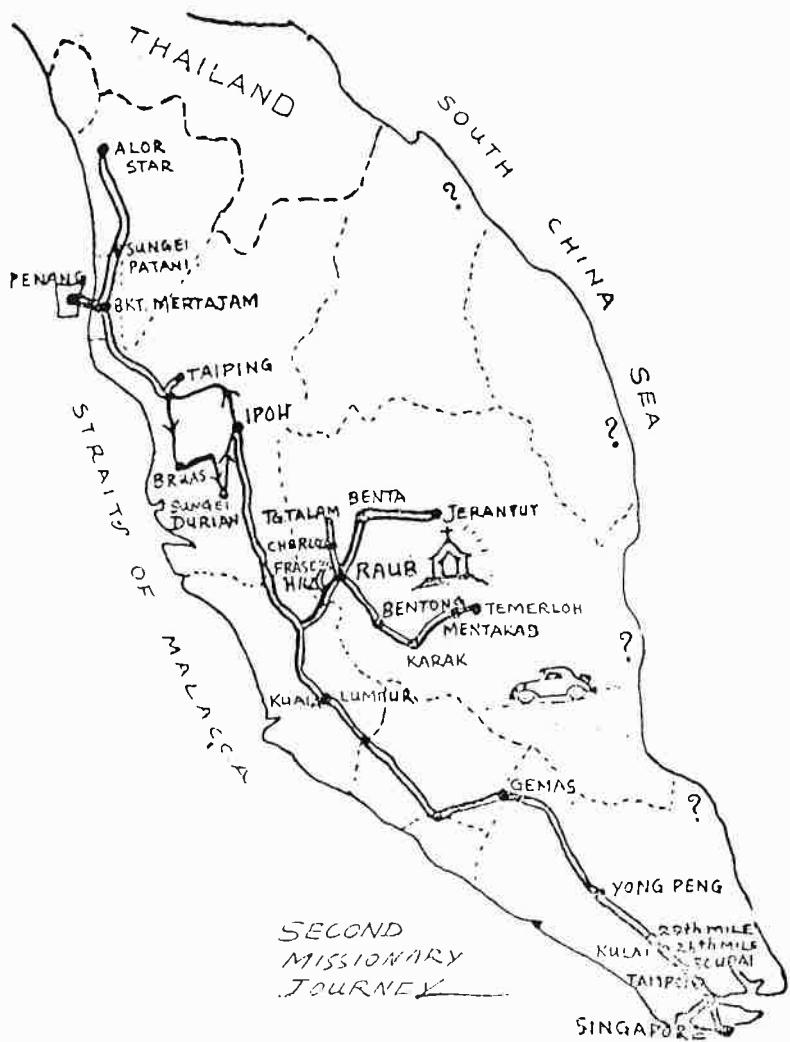
*Only what's done for Christ will last.*

Scarcely had a fortnight passed after our return from the new villages when we received further requests from Pahang "to come back at least for a month." For, they averred, "The harvest truly is plenteous (Matthew 9:37). In principle, Brother Hsu and I were set for new village preaching during Chin Lien Seminary's vacation - so why should we not go? Moreover, when my partner responded with a broad smile the night before our departure, I was sure we could delay no longer. That night the brethren met together for prayer and committed us to the Lord (Acts 13:3).

## **Report on Missionary Journey to Inland Pahang**

We set out early on Monday June 30th. Carrying our usual paraphernalia plus 200 Tamil Gospel portions and Chinese Bibles to be "placed," our Italian whippet was endearing itself to us again in what turned out to be a 1,700-mile journey. The Malaysia Pioneer Mission having previously made debut before the Customs, we had no difficulty in "going through the gate" at Johore Bahru.

## SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY TO INLAND PAHANG



From now on we entered the land of the new villages. Soon we found ourselves at Tampoi and Scudai where we enthusiastically paid the missionaries a visit. Scudai was the first village the Evangelistic League contacted a year ago. How glad we were to see a permanent work established by Miss Laing of the Overseas Fellowship of the China Inland Mission. And our hearts have received reciprocal blessings wherever we came to pray with our friends in the field.

At the 26th mile Kulai Road, Chin Lien graduates working with the Evangelise China Fellowship (Dr Andrew Gih) welcomed us to lunch. Then we set out together to the village school at the 29th mile. Here the girls held weekly Bible classes. Our hearts were stirred when a hundred sprightly youngsters in the village school surprised us with lusty singing of John Sung revival choruses. Meanwhile Miss Kan pumped away diligently on an old Shanghai organ, while Brother Hsu beat time nervously. Our spirits were warmed and we preached with increased fervour. After the service I asked the boys and girls, "Why do you come to school?" To which several lads shouted in unison, "To get knowledge." This thought-provoking answer helped us in the distribution of Mandarin Gospels, which we triumphantly declared was the fountain of knowledge, able to make them wise unto salvation (II Timothy 3:15).

When we drove away to Yong Peng I said to myself, "You should ask Miss Tay to write a tract addressed to knowledge-thirsty students." Thanks to the boys and to Miss Tay, MPM Tract No. 2 depicting a cross on its frontispiece has seen the light as a result of this contact. The Chinese characters on this cross points the reader to the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). We halted for the night at Yong Peng. Space does not permit me to relate an uplifting night meeting there at which a Christian father and his son served iced



MPM Tract No. 2,  
*"Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."*

barley water to keep our preaching going. Nor could I describe an experience at an inn in Kuala Lumpur called the "Four Seas" where rowdy gentlemen of leisure snatched sleep from our heavy eyelids. I learned a good lesson that night. It dawned on me in a new way how great were the inconvenience and suffering our Lord underwent when He lodged on earth. While He gladly lived among vile sinners like us in order to win us to Himself, it was true He was much more comfortable in the holy presence of His Father before the incarnation.

The third day found us "arrived safely" at our destination - Raub. Here a flourishing work is nurtured by Madam Ang Soo Hua, one of the first graduates of Chin Lien Bible Seminary. I have known Madam Ang since boyhood days. I remember how we used to vie with others for seats in the Telok Ayer Methodist Church where Dr John Sung preached. There we were born again by the mighty working of the Spirit (John 3:5). There we dedicated our lives to God (Romans 12:1). How we praised God that we should now reap the Lord's harvest together in this hinterland.

Pahang, though under-developed and isolated, is the largest state in the Federation, and about the size of the Island of Formosa (Taiwan). Here, on this side of the Pahang River, is a white harvest field of 30 villages and towns. But fundamental Christian workers can be numbered on the fingers. Apart from Madam Ang we found a faithful colleague in Madam Lu. She is in charge of the Bentong Methodist Church. In Kuala Lipis we met a Christian brother who is a Government servant. He is leader of a Bethesda assembly. Rev Paul Lenn (one-time co-labourer with Rev Jason Linn of "Pioneering in Dyak Borneo" fame) of Singapore has also entered the field. He has won converts from as far as Gua Musang in Kelantan. The harvest truly is plenteous but labourers are few. It is Madam Ang's prayer that a missionary couple will go over and help them.

This being our second trip to Pahang, we had to consolidate previous labours (Acts 15:36) apart from reaching the villages farther to the north and south of Raub. The routine for the day was preaching in two or three villages in an eighty mile circuit. The Lord opened a door great and effectual to every new school (I Corinthians 16:9). Resettlement officers, school principals and teachers were most cooperative. They would line up the pupils by the scores and hundreds to hear us, and help distribute tracts and Gospel portions. Thanks to Madam Ang's contact, we were constantly kept on the move.

Another phase of village work was house to house visitation (Acts 20:20) after street meetings. At Jerantut, on the way to the East Coast, we came across the school principal's wife. She was a Christian from Seremban recently transplanted to this far-off village. She had brought with her every household comfort except the surest one - the Bible. Whereupon we "placed" a copy in her home and besought her to read a portion to her family everyday. It was a little act, the sowing of a grain of seed. Will it bear fruit in later years?

We had a grand time in the south, around Mentakab. In the new village outside the town a crowd of 300 heard us attentively in the twilight, as you would at some vesper service. After the meeting, grown-ups joined with the children to clamour for tracts and Gospel portions. That night we stayed under the roof of a Mr Teo, the leading merchant of the town. His wife is a Christian, a good friend of Madam Ang. He entertained us very kindly, and the Lord blessed him for his tender heart. After hearing our testimonies the Lord put a keen interest for the faith into him. He expressed a particular liking for the Gospel records, whereupon we presented him one on the Rebirth. It was a little act, the sowing of another grain of seed. We pray it will spring up into everlasting life in the household of our host.

Bentong, where the Queen's African Rifles are stationed must not be passed over in silence. During our previous trip we found a good comrade in Rev Dmvula, a Presbyterian chaplain from Nyasaland, attached to the African troops. We came to know him when we drove into the compound of the Bentong Church to shelter for the night. We met him again this time at the same place. When I told him we would show the Holy Land slides, he brought a dozen men to hear us at the night service. That we should have this privilege of fellowship again with African brethren was another blessing of this trip. By the Wailing Wall of Jerusalem there stood we, Chinese and Africans looking for the Blessed Hope of Israel. Happy will the day be when we shall serve our Master together in the New Jerusalem.

After our week's work in Pahang was concluded the Lord gave us a three-hour holiday up the mountains. On the morning we were to leave Raub for Ipoh on the second phase of our journey, Madam Ang suddenly suggested a side trip for us to Fraser's Hill, only five miles from the trunk road. Here she had a monthly Bible class for 70 school children. She wanted us to speak to them. So we went, but did we ever regret? I felt like saying to the Lord, "It is good for us to stay here." At 4250 feet above the sea, we were transported to a land of perpetual spring. What a change from the hot steaming villages of the plains. I was glad to put on two shirts and a sweater for a change, and feel quite proud of our beautiful Malayan climate.

It happened to be a holiday for the school children. So we had to call on the homes to inform them of our coming one by one. An hour later some forty bright-eyed boys and girls crowded into the school to hear us. We never met a class as eager as these little mountain dwellers.

Seated among the young people was an old lady. She also had come to hear us, and much more than that. She was a first fruit of Madam Ang's faithful ministry, a child

of God through the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ. Her smiles were sweeter than the roses, her amens more musical than the birds. All the mountain beauty and charm paled before the radiance of a soul restored to the everlasting life. Hallelujah! Glory be to the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

When we finally bade Madam Ang good-bye at the foot of the Hill our conversation unconsciously centred around the mighty works of one who gave her life as a pioneer missionary - the church she built in Raub, her duties at Bentong, new villages, house-to-house visitation, the blind woman we met on the first trip, this Bible class at Fraser's Hill and the old lady of her faithful labours. We bury our heads in shame for the way we go about the Lord's work in metropolitan Singapore. A spontaneous cry issued from the heart of two weary disciples on a lonely mountain road, "O Lord, forgive us this day, we pray."

The "Gospel on the Go" which is a reflection on the first year of the Life Church pastor's ministry should lead us farther afield in the years that followed. "The uttermost part of the earth" is the limit in the extension of God's Kingdom. As we have said before Church growth is measured not vertically but horizontally. It is the "Gospel on the Go," the "Gospel on the Go", the "Gospel on the Go," the "Gospel on the Go"....

This "Gospel on the Go" must accelerate in the light of our Premillennial (not Amillennial) Doctrine, and by the prophetic Word of the Apostle Peter, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the

elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (II Peter 3:10-13). This “Gospel on the Go” must accelerate furthermore by the prophetic Word of Christ. In His Olivet Discourse on His Second Coming, predicting these troublous end times in which we live, He says, “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14). Yes, this “Gospel on the Go” must be accelerated, must be accelerated, must be accelerated, in the light of His soon return.

We also have a project Evangelism AD 2000 not like the AD 2000 Ecumenical Evangelism. The Ecumenical Evangelism is rather a promotion of Church union of liberals, charismatics, Catholics, etc. etc. under the guise of Evangelism but it has no Biblical doctrinal base. If it is true AD 2000 Evangelism, it must have direct reference to the imminent Return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our AD 2000 Evangelism is vibrantly based on our Lord’s prophecy, “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Even so, come Lord Jesus! Amen. (Church growth is thereby accelerated under the momentum of redoubled evangelistic efforts in hope of the coming of the King.) Amen.

***Epilogue:*** To repeat the Egyptian pastor’s words is ever enlightening. The Gospel is not Gospel until it comes into motion. Put the GO to the Gospel and put the Gospel in the GO. Yes, indeed, the word “Gospel” is spelled, beginning with “GO”.

## CHAPTER IV

# ON THE GO FOR FORTY-THREE YEARS

### **Malaysia our Judea**

In the spirit of 1951, Life Church has sent forth her pastor beginning from her Jerusalem, and this has taken him literally to the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8). The new villages and towns evangelised by Hsu and Tow in 1951, using the former's brand new two-seater Fiat Marvelette, totalled about sixty. This was accomplished by making sorties also into the East Coast and by many other side trips.

One early result of these relentless efforts was the establishing of a beachhead at Jemaluang, Johore, 87 miles up the East Coast from Singapore. This was occupied by Miss Adeline Char, missionary from Kaimuki Community Church, Honolulu, Hawaii. This was a young American-Chinese lady of Hakka extraction whom Rev Quek Kiok Chiang and I had earlier contacted in Geneva at the Second Plenary Congress of the ICCC, August, 1950. By this "chance" meeting with her, she was led of the Spirit to Singapore, and from Singapore to Jemaluang. Let Miss Char tell her story of pioneering the Gospel in a far off country. Writing in the 1952 issue of the Malaysia Christian Quarterly under the caption "**Gems in Jemaluang,**" Miss Char says:

"I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places..." Isaiah 45:3.

The beginning of the New Year was chosen to make a pioneer missionary journey to Mersing, a fishing seaport town in the Federation of Malaya. Mersing is 100 miles north of Singapore on the northeastern coast of the State of Johore next to the China Sea.

Rev Timothy Tow and Mr Hsu Chiang Tai of the Malaysia Pioneer Mission, Madam Ng Chai Pin, a graduate of Chin Lien Bible Seminary, and I made this three-and-a-half hour journey to claim a promised land for Christ. To our knowledge there was not a single church or missionary in the entire district of Mersing; therefore, we were burdened to establish a Gospel Mission in this dark corner. Before arriving in Mersing we had to travel through forty miles of thick jungles. Beautiful tall trees, green ferns and creeping vines bordered the highway. There were wooden bridges across many little streams along the way. It was said that the bandits caught fish from these little streams. One could see how these jungles served as a fine hiding place.

We found Mersing an attractive town. Foamy, bouncing waves were seen in the greyish-brown water of the China Sea. In the monsoon season the waves dash upon the shores. All fishing stakes here would then be wiped away. When the emergency is over, Mersing will have a future as a holiday resort.

Thirteen miles before Mersing we passed a new village called Jemaluang. Still in the process of building crude wooden houses; the place looked very dismal. This is one of over 400 new villages in Malaya, comprised mainly of poor Chinese people who have been resettled by the British Government because of bandits burning their former homes, murdering, and stealing. In order to curb the hit-and-run terrorism of the bandits, British military

and local Malay police protection have been provided. Most of the people in Jemaluang were resettled there after escape from a dangerous "hot spot" about ten months ago.

While in Mersing, the Administrative Officer told us that there was no Protestant church in the whole Mersing district and that he would be happy to help us should we decide to establish one. We learned that there are 22,000 people in the Mersing district, 5,000 in the town of Mersing, and 3,000 in the village of Jemaluang.

My native dialect is Hakka; therefore, my desire has been to minister among the Hakkas. A large percentage of the village population in Malaya is Hakka and there is a great need for Hakka-speaking missionaries. Over half of the people in Jemaluang are Hakka. The rest are chiefly Cantonese.

After our return from the first trip to Mersing, the Lord made it very clear to me that I should go to stake my claim for Christ and missions in the village of Jemaluang. Madam Ng consented to be my co-worker. In February we sought for a proper place to rent as a mission station, but since we could find none, the Lord indicated that I should take another step of faith in building a small church there. In going to see Mr Steward Bon-Bernard, the Administrative Officer, we were granted a lovely site for the building of a church. There is now great praise, for the Lord has provided within a month the needed funds to build the church, which is expected to be completed by the end of April.

The Chinese name for the village of Jemaluang means "sampan pier." The Malay name of Jemaluang means "Future calm after storm." Jemaluang has a spiritual significance for us who are bringing the peace of Jesus Christ. He, who stilled the tempests, is now and ever will be the only Source of rest in a sinful and turbulent world.



*Miss Adeline Char (top second left) with children  
in Jemaluang Village, Malaysia.*

While the heathen are setting up their idols and walking in fear and the shadow of death, we must hasten to bring the saving knowledge of our living God. While modernistic missions are spreading their deathly forces, we must by His Spirit possess land and people to the uttermost parts of the earth for an inheritance. While China, the ancient homeland of our forefathers is in captivity, I must go with the Gospel while doors are still open in Southeast Asia. There is power in the blood of Christ to free the soul of man from the bondage of sin and death!

Part of my missionary ministry will continue to be in Singapore, the island of Bukom and wherever the Lord will lead me. There are treasures and hidden riches to be sought for and polished for Christ. There are “gems in Jemaluang!” There is glory in self-denial and sacrifice if it means even one beggarly, sin-sick soul is led to find eternal life through receiving Christ.

In going forth to Jemaluang, the Lord has added this promise, “Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.” Exodus 23:20.

Jemaluang, which Miss Char established in 1952, progressively spread its light to Endau, 39 miles farther up north, and then to neighbouring Kampong Hubong, the remnant of a resettlement village of WWII days, and finally to Rompin, in Pahang State. Under her initiative, a brick Church was built at Endau with support from the Evangelistic League, headed by Miss Leona Wu, principal of Chin Lien Bible Seminary and successor to Dr John Sung in the Singapore Pentecost.

In an editorial touching Miss Char’s mission in the Malaysia Christian December ’52 - February ’53, this was our observation,

“Miss Adeline Char, independent American Chinese missionary from Kaimuki Community Church, Honolulu,

to the new villages of Malaya is a Missionary Society herself. We praise God for her wholehearted devotion to take the Gospel to the remote village of Jemaluang, Mersing, 87 miles north of Singapore on the East Coast. We praise God also that her work has earned Government approval, and a piece of land is granted by the authorities to build a Church."

Why should we of the Life B-P Church help with all our might a missionary from Honolulu establish a Church? This we naturally did because our concept of Church Growth is not of "my church" or "our church," but the Church of Jesus Christ everywhere. Both being members of the ICCC our fellowship with one another remained undiminished through the years that followed. Miss Char has visited 40 countries during her 40 years' ministry in the Far East and has written a book of missionary stories titled "Call to Asia," published by Christian Life Publishers, 9A Gilstead Road, Singapore.

Another result of the many trips to Malaya made after May 1951 was the claiming in 1954 of Kelapa Sawit on the 26 mile Kulai Road along the West Coast Highway. Today Kelapa Sawit BPC is fully developed on a half acre of prime land on the highest point of the village. It has a handsome brick Church seating 250 and a thriving kindergarten of 200. Miss Ng Sang Chiew, one of first three students of Far Eastern Bible College (1962), has manned the Church faithfully for the last decade. Kelapa Sawit is the headquarters of BP Churches in Malaysia.

From 1956 to 1964 I became moderator of an English-speaking young people's group at Batu Pahat where Father had established his medical practice since 1936. Today it is a full-fledged Grace Presbyterian Church (English). We used to worship on a Saturday night because in Johore State where Batu Pahat is, Friday is their Sabbath and Saturday (for schools). Sunday is a working day. This arrangement well suited us in

Singapore, for this gave the pastor plenty of time for adjustment in regard to his Sunday pulpit. This paradoxically facilitated Church Growth both ways.

1964 saw the planting of a Church deep inside Pahang State, based at Temerloh, meeting at the Government quarters of Dr Tow Siang Yeow. This work was later transferred to a Brethren Assembly who acquired a piece of land and built a handsome Gospel Hall on it. This facilitated Church Growth for another denomination.

1965 saw the Lord leading the Singapore pastor to preach once a month at Muar Presbyterian Church for the starting of an English Service. Muar is 128 miles northwest of Singapore and 32 miles from Batu Pahat. To kill two birds, the Singapore pastor simultaneously answered another call from Rawang Christian Church, five miles beyond Muar on the other side of the Muar River. Founded 1922, they had not had a pastor for two decades. After ministering regularly once a month at Rawang for six years, a new brick Church 33 feet by 66 feet with parsonage and adjoining kindergarten was built on their handsome two-acre compound. Rawang voted to join the BP Church in 1972.

When revival came to Rawang, a new Church occupying a corner terrace house becomes their extension at Bukit Gambir, 13 miles inland (1992). Rawang has added two churches to the Bible-Presbyterian Church movement! Between Rawang and Bukit Gambir in point of time is Kulai Besar. When the Life Church pastor had fulfilled his mission to Rawang in 1973, he acquired a new corner terrace-house at Kulai Garden for M\$14,700. Today this property is worth six times its original price. Here is developed a self-supporting Church and Kindergarten. Rev David W T Wong, another FEBC graduate, is minister.

Going back to Kelapa Sawit (founded 1954), she also had extended herself to: 1) Bukit Batu, 33rd mile Kulai Road. A

Sunday school was being maintained for years. In 1983 Life Church purchased for them 25,000 feet of rubber land at M\$1 per square foot. This land has appreciated considerably and is waiting for the building of another B-P Church. Life Church is holding in trust S\$160,000 which she had gathered in Bukit Batu's name. Rev John Ling, an FEBC graduate and elder of Kelapa Sawit, is trustee.

Rev Ling of Kelapa Sawit is today pastoring a Presbyterian Church at Kemaman, Trengganu on the Upper East Coast, which has not had a pastor for two years. In a sense it is Church Growth through Kelapa Sawit.

In 1986, at the request of Kelapa Sawit Life Church purchased a newly-built "double" corner terrace house at Air Bemban at the 29th mile Kulai Road (three miles north of K.S.). Today it has a flourishing Kindergarten and a Sunday Church Service and Sunday School. Elder Sng Teck Leong of Life Church goes monthly to minister both at Kelapa Sawit and Air Bemban. Not only Elder Sng, there is also Elder Edmund Tay who also regularly ministers at Kelapa Sawit - to the Tamil B-P Congregation. The spirit of the Gospel on the Go has also gripped the Life Church Evangelistic Band, founded in 1987 in the spirit of Rev Ting Li Mei and Dr John Sung. This group of zealous young people has regularly evangelised the village by tracting, and fellowshipping with the Kelapa Sawit Youth Fellowship. Here you see Church Growth expedited by the laity.

From 1983 to 1992 Life Church supported the work of Rev Liew Hon Seng, an early FEBC graduate, in a semi-detached house he had purchased in a housing estate in Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian capital. Now called Peace B-P Church, she has branched out to Selayang Segar, near Batu Caves, to start a second "Peace centre." Rev Liew is bilingual, so he is able to reach both the Chinese and the English-speaking. They are now fully self-supporting.

It is to be noted that all the branch churches we have founded in Malaysia are Chinese-speaking using the following dialects: Teochew, Hokkien, Hakka, Cantonese. (Mandarin is the standard common Chinese spoken language.) Multi-lingualism is a most vital asset to mission outreaches and planting churches. The learning of another language is surely profitable to church growth.

Last but not least is the raising of Muar Bible-Presbyterian Church by Rev and Mrs Koa Keng Woo. Rev Koa is an eminent graduate of FEBC. A Chinese teacher, he has also earned his School Certificate in English. He is not only bilingual but also a musician.

Though a member of Trinity Presbyterian Church he has favoured the B-P position. After graduation he started the Muar B-P Church, to identify his work with us. Being the only ordained minister in the Muar district he is called upon to administer the Lord's Supper in circuit for Trinity, Rawang and Bukit Gambir. His concept of church growth is the same as ours. Jokingly he is sometimes called the Bishop of Muar. He is a member of the Board of Directors of FEBC and lectures every week at his alma mater.

## **Indonesia our Samaria**

From 1972, two decades after the founding of Life B-P Church, the Lord of Harvest began to thrust us into Indonesia. The first door into Indonesia was Medan, North Sumatra. Our purpose of visiting Medan (in company of Rev Quek) was to answer the call of a separatist Batak Church in conjunction with the International Council of Christian Churches. While little fruit was borne on this visit, the Lord led us in a mysterious way to the Siregar family.

As a result of this contact, Dohar, the eldest son was sent to Singapore to study at FEBC. The theology of Calvin so gripped Dohar that he surrendered to the Lord for salvation and consecration. On fire for the Lord after graduation, he returned to his hometown to spread the Word by every means he could. He got his father, an elder in the old HKBP Batak Church, saved. This so stir up the zeal in the old man that he offered his country house at Benta Kersik for a meeting place. Meanwhile his two younger brothers, Haposan and Agus, were also won to the Lord in some mass evangelistic meeting in Medan. They also came to FEBC for training.

In time to come Bapa Wesly Siregar the father was ordained. Haposan and Agus in turn graduated from FEBC. They returned to Medan to help in the Lord's work.

During their days of study at FEBC, the Lord gave them and the principal with the concurrence of four other students including an Australian missionary candidate to Indonesia to start an Indonesian Service at Life Church. This was inaugurated on February 7, 1982. With the help of Elder and Mrs Charlie Chia, modern Aquila and Priscilla couple, the Kebaktian Indonesia has maintained well to this day, without a break. Church Growth from College students!

After two decades there are now planted in Medan and Kuta Bahru (North Sumatra) three Churches; two flourishing Christian Kindergartens and a Primary School (with nine classrooms), an orphanage, two burgeoning Sunday Schools and a Young People's movement.

This is how North Sumatra developed. In the course of planting this indigenous Batak Church, Life Church called on Galilee BPC to help. To help them establish a permanent work, Galilee bought them a compound house in a housing district, which sheltered not only a Church but also a kindergarten. The

educational work of the young Batak Church was so vibrant that they outgrew themselves in a few years. In order to help them expand, Life Church bought them an adjoining piece of land (which has marriage value in the parlance of property dealers). This gave them space to extend nine classrooms from the old Church and school house.

This phenomenal growth of the Christian day school so impressed the authorities that the Bible Presbyterian Church in Medan received official recognition in November 1992, after 20 years of hard work, 1972-1992. Permission was simultaneously granted for the extension of B-P Churches throughout the Indonesian Archipelago of 13,000 Islands. "He that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth" (Rev 3:7) has set us an open door to every part of Indonesia! It is a challenge for the Bible Presbyterian Church movement to enter this widened new fold without delay. Church growth, bless Indonesia, is encouraged by this far-flung nation of 180,000,000 under the five principles of "Pancasila," the first principle being belief in one God. Wherever we go in Indonesia today we have the freedom of preaching the Gospel, though Indonesia is 85 per cent Muslim.

Hard on the heels of the advance to Medan in 1972, the Lord led us to Tanjung Pinang, chief city and port of Bintan Island in the Riau Archipelago. Here was planted a Church by Rev Tan Peng Koen a retired Methodist pastor from Palembang, South Sumatra. A Presbyterian by training, however, and a zealous follower of John Sung and Lim Puay Hian (John Sung's disciple and evangelist) he was touched by the spiritual needs of the Chinese community in Tanjung Pinang in the course of his travels. Thus in 1967 he borrowed the premises of an old Dutch Church (now bequeathed to the Indonesian Reformed Church) to start a Chinese service.

In the providence of God he soon discovered a piece of land on high ground not far from the City Centre selling for a song, because it was "haunted." This he bought and built a primary school, using one of the classrooms for a Church auditorium on Sundays. Rev Tan was so impressed with the B-P Testimony that he committed the moderatorship of his Church to the pastor of Life Church, before his final retirement to Taiwan.

From 1973 to this day the Zion Presbyterian Church of Tanjung Pinang has come into our fellowship. By this fellowship we have helped them financially in the development of a branch at Kijang, 17 miles on the other side of the Island. In cooperation with Preacher Liu and his wife Esther, the son-in-law and daughter of Rev Tan, our Chinese Service has opened a Gospel station since 1990 at Tanjung Uban, a seaport town on the Island of Bintan opposite Batam Island. With Singapore going all out to develop Bintan Island, Tanjung Uban has suddenly come into the lime-light. Church growth from Singapore with the cooperation of Zion Presbyterian Church has seen the firm establishment of three Churches on Bintan Island in the last quarter-century — Tanjung Pinang, Kijang and Tanjung Uban.

But this is not all. Meanwhile, on adjacent Batam Island, which is only an half-hour's boat ride from Singapore, Life Church was quickly evangelizing in cooperation with a shipyard under the management of a devout Korean deacon. This shipyard, named Batamas, has a pocket-size chapel converted from a container, for the worship of the Korean Christian staff. Seeing there was a need to hold Lord's Day services for his Indonesian shipyard workers, mostly Christian Bataks, we agreed to send to this shipyard, Roska, an FEBC graduate. Thus in December of 1989, Roska became our missionary to Batam, ministering to some 25 Batak shipyard workers for a start.

One year after Life Church's advance to Batam, Calvary BPC our brother church also came on the scene. Contacting one

of our converts from Tanjung Pinang now newly shifted to Batam Island, Mr Tan Nam Siang, Calvary started a regular Sunday service in his three-storey shop house, on the second floor. To be more securely established insofar as official regulations are concerned, Calvary BPC “opened business” under the name of the “Santapan Rohani” Church which is registered with the Indonesian Government. For the sake of Church Growth, this combination between a Baptist Church and a Bible-Presbyterian Church is “negotiable.” To head such a branch church of Santapan Rohani, an Indonesian national was required. Since the BPs on Batam Island were all Chinese except for Roska, the newly-born Church was registered in Roska’s name, as “elder.” So “elder” Roska now had a dual ministry - preaching at the shipyard and preaching by rotation (and interpreting) at the Church started by Calvary. The “cross-breed” Church was transferred to a three-storey terrace house in town which was acquired soon after Mr Tan Nam Siang had his.

Meanwhile a developer has donated a piece of land to Calvary BPC for the construction of a proper Church edifice. When this is completed her Santapan Rohani name will revert to B-P, now that B-P is recognised all over Indonesia! This is Church Growth B-P style!

A third field that is fertile to Church Growth, B-P style, is West Kalimantan. In 1971 Rev Quek and I visited this Bornean Island where we discovered a gem in Rev Andrias Djunaidi. A Christian orphanage and a Bible School were developed by Rev Quek with Rev Djunaidi superintending at Sebetung, on the edge of the jungle.

After five years Djunaidi left this “colony” to other able hands as he felt the Lord was calling him to go to the capital city, Pontianak on the Kapuas River. With the help of Life Church he built a river boat 55 feet long costing S\$50,000. On this Gospel boat, named “Kapuas Kourier,” he stayed with his family for



*The Gospel Boat comes calling*



*Djunaidi's School and Orphanage*

nearly three years along Indonesia's mightiest river (1,000 km long) and its many tributaries sowing the Gospel seed. "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass" (Isaiah 32:20).

However the Lord had greater plans for Djunaidi after this riverine evangelism had accomplished its purpose. The Lord led His servant to acquire a piece of land at the edge of a slum settlement of a thousand refugees from the Dyak uprising of 1967 that had killed a number of Chinese settlers on the edge of the jungle. Here Djunaidi began a permanent work by building a Church, parsonage and a kindergarten. Seeing that this new work was growing by leaps and bounds, Life Church took the initiative to acquire more land to cope with the church growth. A Primary School and an Orphanage were added, with staff quarters. When a total area of two-and-a-half acres was acquired, Life Church contributed another S\$150,000 to build a three storey "long house" with a view to establishing a Bible Institute.

The Far Eastern Bible Institute (Institut Alkitab Timur Jauh) went on for a couple of years. Owing to internal disharmony among the staff, it had to be discontinued, though Bible night classes are maintained to this day for the high school pupils. The school on the other hand flourished so that new classes were added until they reached high school level. From the Christian teaching inculcated through school and orphanage, scores of young people are baptised every year.

After a decade of support from Life Church, Djunaidi became financially independent in 1987. Now he was able to build on his own. He established two churches, one with a kindergarten, up the Kapuas River. Today he has five churches under his charge and over a thousand students. Church growth through education and orphanage, B-P style!



*Far Eastern Bible Institute and Kindergarten*



*A Dyak Church built by Djunaidi*

Here is one principle of Church growth we've found that is both expeditious and economical. It is the regular support of a national leader who is called of the Lord. The same must be efficient, industrious, sagacious and honest. Djunaidi is one in whom are combined these qualities. Though not Bible-Presbyterian, he has advanced the Gospel work with us not only in his country, but also in pioneering work in Indonesia "beside another stream." He has deputised for me, for example, at Kijang and baptised by sprinkling converts because he sees as we see - baptism by water can be more or less! This quickens the pace of growth.

Djunaidi is a spirit-filled preacher. So he has served with us in Singapore and Malaysia, holding Gospel meetings with good results. He has helped our country churches in Malaysia such as Rawang and Kijang in the Riau Islands. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore" (Psalm 133). Amen.

## **Unto the Uttermost Part of the Earth**

Now, when it was declared by the Government representative at a special service held in Medan with five Singapore B-P ministers to witness the recognition of the Bible-Presbyterian Church for all-Indonesia, the pastor of Life Church was moved to aspire to the regions beyond, yea, even to Ujung Pandang. Formerly called Makassar, it is an important city on the Island of Celebes, now renamed Sulawesi. Ujung Pandang may be freely translated "horizons beyond." Church growth is an urgent matter for the mission-minded Church. When will our

Indonesian brethren, not the least our Singapore sons and daughters, "launch out into the deep"? to farther horizons to extend God's Kingdom unto the uttermost part of the earth before He comes? Praise the Lord, here comes Djunaidi again to answer His call. As this book goes to press, Djunaidi is venturing out to Balikpapan in East Kalimantan to re-visit the fields cultivated by Jason Linn of Pioneering in Dyak Borneo fame two generations ago.

On the economic horizon, however, there appeared Senior Minister Mr Lee Kuan Yew soon after our Medan meeting with the Indonesian Ministry of Religion Officer. In Straits Times, dated January 9, 1993, Mr Lee declared,

Singapore must create a better entrepreneurial culture and throw up enough people who can take Singapore Inc. abroad. Otherwise it would not grow as rapidly as Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong which had overseas investments that would contribute 20 to 30 per cent more of their economy... We can enthuse a younger generation with the thrill and the rewards of building an external dimension to Singapore. We can and we will spread our wings into the region and then into the wide world.

Commenting on the Senior Minister's exhortation to Singapore to venture abroad for the sake of economic growth, we editorialised in the January 17, 1993 issue of the Life B-P Church Sunday Bulletin about a good example set forth by Korea, both by the leaders of national economic development and leaders of the Church. We wrote:

Now, Korea is mentioned as one that has ventured abroad contributing 20 to 30 percent more of their economy. What Koreans have done in the economic field they have achieved also in the religious field. I understand Korea is today fielding over 2,000 missionaries. Wherever we've gone into the world, we've found a Korean Church.

Supporting missions abroad has not impoverished the Korean Church. Nay, it has rather enriched it.

If our Church in Singapore is to be similarly blessed is it not high time for us to redouble our missionary efforts? Insofar as Life Church is concerned, we have our sons and daughters sent to Philippines and North Thailand. Now that the door of China is opened, whoso readeth let him understand (this refers to a recent convert of a Teaching-assistant from a University in China), we should enter quickly lest it be shut.

This China door is opened primarily to our Chinese Service whose financial strength is greatly increased. It is a logical development from their Uban Station on Bintan Island. I am delighted to hear some young people of our Chinese Service are praying and preparing for the day of their venturing out.

In this connection we must commend Rev Yap Beng Shin for his indefatigable zeal all these years to evangelise China. He needs our prayers and our support. Two teams of young people, one from LBC (Life Bible Class), I understand, are going with him in the near future. And how wonderful to enter that newly opened door ...

To China, by a new open door, to more distant horizons — “unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

### **From China's Towering Mountains (Adapted)**

From China's tow'ring mountains, From Taiwan's coral strand  
Where Yunnan's lofty fountains, Roll down the Southern sand  
From mighty Yangtse River, From Shanghai on the plain  
They call us to deliver, Their sons from error's chain.

What though the balmy breezes Blow soft o'er Hainan Isle  
Though ev'ry prospect pleases And only man is vile  
In vain with lavish kindness The gifts of God are strown  
The Chinese in their blindness Bow down to wood and stone

Shall we whose souls are lighted With wisdom from on high  
Shall we to men benighted The Lamp of Life deny?  
Salvation O salvation! The joyful sound proclaim  
Till Earth's most ancient nation Has learned Jesus' sweet Name.

Waft, waft ye winds, His story, And you, ye waters roll  
Till like a sea of glory It spreads from pole to pole  
Till o'er our ransomed nature The Lamb for sinners slain  
Redeemer, King, Creator, In bliss returns to reign.

(*Tune: From Greenland's Icy Mountain*)

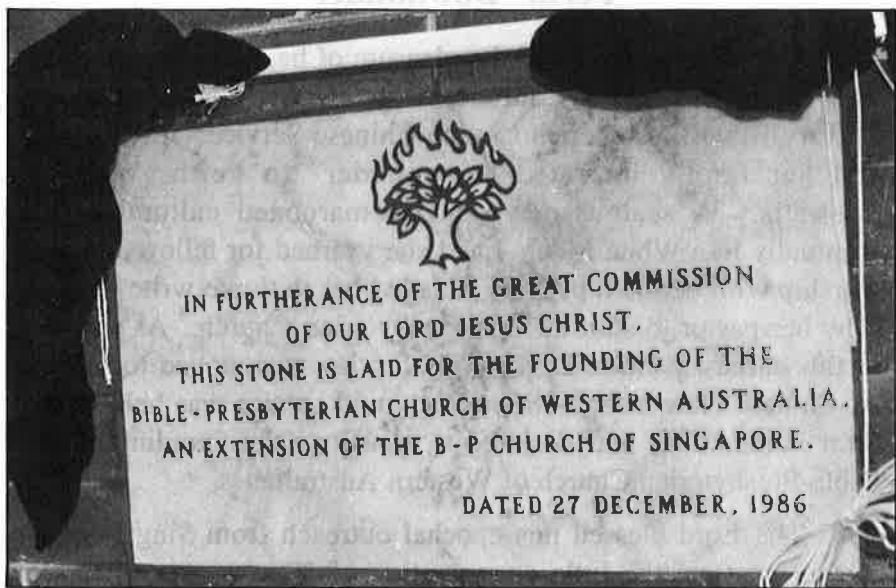
Before this clarion call to China, however, the Lord had begun to thrust us forth as we entered the eighties. The following are highlights of the missionary movement, going "downunder" and all over ASEAN, beyond ASEAN into Burma, yea, all the way to Africa. Let us begin with Australia.

### Perth "Downunder"

Mrs Sitor whom I had the pleasure of baptising because she was Cantonese and I Cantonese-speaking was a member of Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church Chinese Service. In 1985 she and her family migrated "downunder" to Perth, Western Australia. A zealous new convert marooned culturally and spiritually in a White Man's Land she yearned for fellowship and worship with her own people. This led her to thrice write Dr S H Tow her pastor to start a Bible-Presbyterian Church. As a result of this earnest petition Dr Tow my brother was moved to action. At Chinese New Year, 1986 an inaugural service was held at the Sitor home. This was declared to constitute the founding of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Western Australian.

The Lord blessed this epochal outreach from Singapore so that in no time the little congregation of 30 was able to rent a "lesser" town hall where the holding of Sunday services was more

# PERTH



*Mr Robin Tan and Rev Timothy Tow at the unveiling of the stone.*

conducive. Robin Tan and wife Patricia, Lifers who migrated before the Sitors to Perth, rallied to the Lord. In those early days of yeoman service Calvary in Singapore had a difficult time maintaining the Sunday pulpit. As Dr S H Tow could not be there but on occasions, the Sunday pulpit was filled by video tapes of speakers mostly at Calvary's Sunset Gospel Hour. Here is a case where brothers, like Peter and his fellow disciples (Jn 21) went "fishing" for the Lord together. Life Church's share in the founding of the first Church established "downunder" is recorded in the Vision Magazine, 1986-87 as follows:

Perth is the first of three outreaches of Calvary B-P Church to Australia. The other two are Adelaide and Melbourne.

On February 23, 1986, in response to the Macedonian call of Mrs Sitor who had migrated with her family to Perth, the pastor of Calvary BPC flew there to inaugurate what is now known as the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Western Australia. The B-P nucleus of this new Church included Sunny and Michael Kwong and Sitor nephews, and Mr & Mrs Robin Tan of Life Church. The Lord has used Robin and his wife in the running of the day-to-day affairs of the Church. The publication of a Church Weekly with good material and up-to-date news items has helped tremendously to bring the people together.

No sooner had the young Church been inaugurated in the Sitor home than an ideal sanctuary was found at the Lesser City Hall of Melville, a township of Perth. After a few months, negotiations were started to buy over a 30-year old Presbyterian Church at Mount Pleasant, three miles from Perth on the Canning Highway. This Church is 1 1/2 times the FEBC Hall, with an adjoining social hall half its size. The land area is 1887 sq. m. Hearing of the good work in Perth, a sister of Life Church offered to buy it for the Lord.

When the Church first started, video tapes of Calvary worship services were used. Dr Tow Siang Hwa flew in and out a number of times to keep the home fires burning. Rev Paauwe also came over from Adelaide to help. There was once when the Life Church pastor flew downunder to preach just one sermon, returning the same Sunday afternoon! That sermon cost \$900.

In May - June, Rev and Mrs Tow ministered in Perth for five Sundays. From September 18, 1986 to January 4, 1987, they went again, ministering 16 Sundays. Mr Mark Heath, who was in Perth for three months between June and September, is now married in Singapore. He and wife Grace Lauw (both FEBC graduates) are waiting to go down in a month or two when their Permanent Resident Status is obtained.

Meanwhile, Elder and Mrs Khoo Peng Kiat have been invited by Calvary to stand in the gap. Friends of Robin, they will be a great help in many ways. In step almost with the Khoos, a young couple, Ong Eng Lam and his wife Shirleen, will be flying also to Perth, where Eng Lam will study at the University. Being zealous youth leaders in Singapore, their joining the BPCWA will no doubt add to the strength of the YF there.

From a weekly attendance of 35, the BPCWA has grown to 100-120 to date. It has become self-supporting after one year. Phone Robin Tan, (09)448-5557, or the parsonage, (09)474-1200. You also have a part to play in Perth. And pray!

## **Chiangmai, North Thailand**

From "downunder" let us return to our base in Singapore and from here shoot up to Chiangmai, North Thailand! Jess Lim, a young Lifer who graduated from FEBC felt the Lord calling her at first to Yala, South Thailand. Through many paths straight or

winding ordered of the Lord she finally ended up north. Let Jess tell her own story:

"Go, and don't come back." That was the advice given by Rev Tow when I was first commissioned to "the land of a million rice fields." That is, "Lanna" the ancient name of Chiangmai.

And so, the road to the mission field began. From Yala down south where I joined a family camp with fellow FEBCer Prachan (a Thai), I took a train to Chiangmai. There I served with the Frontier Labourers for Christ (FLC) within the Golden Triangle for four years.

Serving among the rough and wild was never easy - especially for a single lady and practically alone manning the whole fort. But I thank God for His faithfulness in such hard-to-come-by experiences with the hilltribes. In fact, I must thank God for this opening which I had waited since FEBC days.

My first Thai contact was in 1981 at the Baptist Pattaya camp. The many temples and polygamous families that I witnessed lay a burden on my heart for Thailand. The burden increased on a mission trip to the Golden Triangle in May 1984. Then in October 1984 I shouldered the burden when asked to "hold the fort" for Rev Daniel Kalnin, director of the FLC on furlough studies in USA. That year, the Thai government stopped issuing new quotas for missionaries. The Lord helped me through the Korean Presbyterian Mission at a fee of US\$100. In 1987 it was increased to US\$500 but the Lord provided me with a Thai husband which automatically gave me residence.

When Rev Kalnin returned from the States in 1988, both Deeram and I went back to FEBC where Deeram continued his studies (disrupted in 1986) while I raised two children: Kittikhun Paul (1987) and Karuna Ann (1989). I also had the opportunity to train as a kindergarten teacher at the Far Eastern Kindergarten, took a Library Science

course and got my piano certificate. We also served at the Thai Service.

Commissioned to Chiangmai again, the Tamees returned to start the Life BP Students Centre. The first church service was held on June 2, 1991. The next Sunday, Deeram invited his friend and wife. Ms Buakhiauw invited her sisters who invited their colleagues in the same factory. When the factory closed down, they found new jobs in different places and there they invited new friends. Why, blessings come in many guises! Life BPSC had just celebrated her first anniversary on May 31, 1992 when Rev Tow baptized four firstfruits.

'Tis true, mission work is never easy. But, "no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). To the mission field: Go, and don't come back.

## Philippines

From as early as 1951 our relationship with the Philippines through leaders of the International Council of Christian Churches has been sweet. But it was not until 1979 that we were introduced to Rev Dan Ebert III a veteran missionary who had pioneered the Gospel in the jungles of Palawan for 12 long years to translate the Bible into the Palawano language.

In telling the story of Life Church's involvement in Manila to help build three Fundamental Baptist Churches and now a "Hilltop" Bible College complex, it is a must to read this brief biography of Dan Ebert III written by his son Dan IV. Dan Ebert III's life is like the corn of wheat that falls into the ground and dies, that brings forth much fruit (John 12:24). It is through our confidence in him that we are moved, Bible-Presbyterians, to build Baptist Churches and a Filipino Bible College (in conjunction with Calvary B-P Church).

**REV DANIEL JOHN EBERT III**  
**A Biographical Impression by his son Dan IV**  
*(in Life B-P Weekly dated 5 March 1989)*

On Sunday afternoons young Dan Ebert could often be found at the side of his father, Rev Daniel Ebert Jr., as the latter ministered to the drunks and outcasts of Philadelphia's Skid Row. His father, who worked as a press manager for the Curtis Publishing Company, was a lay-preacher. By the time of his death three years ago Rev Dan Ebert Jr. had established several churches in the New Jersey-Pennsylvania area, had won hundreds of men and women to the Lord, and had influenced the lives of countless young people for Christ. Though this is the story of his son, the father must not be forgotten: he is the root from which the tree has sprung.

In such a home, the call to the foreign mission field was received with bitter-sweet joy. There would be sorrow in the years of separation from loved ones, but joy would come from following Jesus to the ends of the earth. Upon receiving his call from the Lord, Rev Ebert underwent his missionary preparation at the New Tribes Mission training institute, this was supplemented with linguistic studies at the University of Wisconsin. Rev Ebert also completed his studies at the South Jersey Bible Institute. Soon the young missionary found himself, along with his wife and three small children, living in the midst of the jungles on the island of Palawan in the Philippines. The Lord had placed him in an obscure corner of His vineyard in an unheard of part of the world. In such a place, surrounded by a primitive people, facing frequent sickness from malaria, his father's life verses often gave him strength:

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and LET US RUN WITH PATIENCE the race that is set before us,

LOOKING UNTO JESUS the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1,2).

The Lord's timing is perfect. The hearts of the Palawano tribe had been cultivated by the Spirit for conversion. Within the first few years of his labour, a large part of the tribe had turned to Christ. Witch doctors burned their medicine bags, entire villages turned to the Lord, and little churches were built. Now the long and arduous work of translating the New Testament into the Palawano language began. Rev Ebert gave himself to this task with singleness of mind and heart. He would not be distracted. Rarely would he leave the jungle for rest and refreshment. The yearly trip to Manila, wisely required by the mission, he found an irritation. The Palawano saints must have their Bible. The months and years passed. Finally in 1965, despite failing health from malaria and overwork, the task was complete. The first Palawano New Testament came off the press. For having completed this New Testament translation, and for the quality of his work, Rev Ebert was elected to be an honorary life-time member of the United Bible Societies. This was of little value to the weary missionary in comparison with the reality of Palawano Christians now reading God's Word in their own tongue.

During his furlough in America the following year, the Lord led Rev Ebert, in fellowship with several fundamental pastors, to found the Christian Training and Missionary Fellowship. Under the auspices of CTMF, of which he has served as the field director for the past twenty years, Rev Ebert has contributed in many ways to the separatist Bible-believing movement in the ASEAN region. He has taught for many years at the Fundamental Baptist Bible Institute in Metro-Manila, where he presently serves as Dean of the Faculty. During the course of his ministry he has written numerous popular commentaries on various

books of the Bible, a series of books on Bible doctrine, and a most significant work on biblical separation entitled, **Will Our Sons Defend the Faith?** Many of these works have been written in preparation for lectures given at yearly pastors' and workers' conferences in the Philippines, but their circulation has extended far beyond this.

In 1977 his eldest son joined him in the work, and in 1979 his younger son also took up the task. Rev Dan Ebert III had been very close in heart and spirit to his own father, this despite their almost constant separation during 30 years of foreign missionary service. When Rev Dan Ebert Jr. was called Home in 1986, the Lord tenderly timed it with the son's furlough. After having spent some happy days together, the father passed away in the hospital. His last conversation had been with his bed-side nurse, to whom he bore witness of God's saving grace. The father who had led the son down Skid Row for Christ so many years ago was now gone. His presence could never be replaced. But the Lord had eased the loss for Rev Ebert by the balm of one son on his right hand and a second on his left. The tree which had sprung from the root now had two branches. Under the counsel of their father the sons have established the Center for Biblical Studies, a small graduate school committed to training pastors in Biblical languages and theology for the cause of the fundamental separatist Church in the Philippines. At the Centre Rev Ebert teaches Hebrew, Contemporary Theology, and Old Testament studies.

Several years ago Rev Ebert began making annual trips to Singapore, where he has ministered among the Bible-Presbyterian Churches. He is a regular contributor to the popular RPG devotional series, and has been a guest lecturer at the Far Eastern Bible College, as well as a guest speaker at several family camps. These visits, as well as the important visits of Dr Timothy Tow and his brother Dr Tow Siang Hwa to the Philippines, have helped to cultivate

a healthy and fruitful relationship between the separatist churches in these two ASEAN nations. Important funds coming from the churches in Singapore for relief work in the Philippines, as well as substantial funds for the building of Filipino churches, have been channelled through Rev Ebert.

In the midst of these heavy teaching, writing and administrative ministries, Rev Ebert is preparing for a second publication of the Palawano New Testament, as well as a new edition of the Palawano hymnal.

From the biographical sketch of Rev Dan Ebert III by his son, the reader will understand what we meant, at the outset of this treatise that we would rather build fundamental Baptist churches in the Philippines than have anything to do with unfaithful Bible-Presbyterians.

Having come out of the Palawan jungles, Rev Ebert began to attract a goodly number of young Filipino pastors whom he had taught in a new fellowship of churches separated from modernism and ecumenism. As these young pastors struggled to establish their congregations more firmly, they needed to erect permanent buildings for worship. Three of the most promising ones came into our purview. At the recommendation of Rev Ebert we extended a helping hand whereby three handsome churches were built. The first one included the purchase of 500 sqm of Government land. The second was a tearing down of the aged edifice to be replaced by the new. The third was built on land donated by some church member. All in all Life Church contributed S\$300,000.

In the course of helping them with our funds, God raised up one of Life Church's eminent sons to give himself and his wife (also a Lifer and both are graduates of FEBC) to the training of workers in the Philippines. It was a clear call like the heavenly vision given to Paul, and soon they went under the mother

Church's support in June 1991. Here is Charles Seet's own testimony in FEBC's 30th Anniversary magazine:

When I left FEBC in 1990, the Lord opened a door of service in the mission field. Through the close ties that our College has with Rev Dan Ebert III, a missionary in the Philippines for over 30 years, I came to know about the need for Bible teachers in the Metro-Manila School of the Bible. My wife and I made a short trip so that the Mission there could assess our suitability as missionary candidates. On our return we shared with our church, our desire to serve the Lord in the Philippines, and after a year of preparation, we were commmissioned and sent to this mission field.

Shortly after we arrived in Manila on 3 June 1991, I began teaching Greek I and Major Prophets at the Bible School. The Lord enabled us to find a suitable home and we moved in the middle of July. Our application for a 9-G visa was approved in November, and by the month of December when our boxes of books and household equipment arrived from Singapore, we were quite settled down. The second semester of the Bible School began, and by God's grace I was able to teach 3 courses - Greek II, Esther and Hebrews. The end of the school year saw the graduation of 9 with Bachelor of Theology and 7 with Bachelor of Religious Studies. The new academic year began in June 1992, and I am presently involved in the work of teaching 3 students in the Greek I course, 8 students in the Old Testament Survey I course, and 22 students in the Pentateuch course. Many of these students are already involved in full-time Christian ministry in the local churches.

Besides teaching, the Lord has also given me the opportunity to minister His Word a total of twelve times at the various churches, at the school's chapel hour, and at a Pastors' and Christian workers' conference held in May this year. I have also had the opportunity to help in the

promotion of God's Kingdom through design work for letterheads, publicity posters, anniversary, graduation and conference programmes, and logos; and also through publication of Bible study material and newsletters for the Mission and for the Bible School. Some time is also spent being involved in preparations, for the Hilltop Project. God bless Singapore for helping us to build.

I am thankful to the Lord for keeping us in good health and strength, and for granting me good recovery from amoebic dysentery last year. By His grace we have been able to cope with power and water shortages, and with other contingencies. Through these things we have learnt precious lessons on trusting in God's faithfulness, providence and sufficiency for every need.

It is truly by the Lord's grace that we have been able to complete 15 months of missionary service in the Philippines, and we are very thankful for the encouragements we have received, and for the prayers that were made for us.

Not only 15 months have the Charles Seets served at the time of penning this testimony, our brother has pursued his calling with greater devotion to this day as this book goes to press.

Today Rev Dan Ebert III with the help of his two missionary sons is involved in the building of a Bible College Complex on a Hilltop at Antipolo, Manila, a Hilltop spread over five acres of choicest countryside. This project is spearheaded by the genius of Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church under the direction of Dr S H Tow. Knowing that their needs are great and it is the Lord's will that we should support such a worthy cause, we have not only sent the Charles Seets to help the Metro-Manila School of the Bible but also urged our Life Church members to do our bit. To date we have contributed well over US\$100,000, and more should readily come in. So long as we know the Gospel will be fruitfully taught and preached in this land of 7000 islands,

we will not refrain from doing our best. When the building operations are completed, this School will have facilities for 200 boarding students. This is a most cost-effective means to promote church growth unto the uttermost part of the earth, via the Philippines.

## Beyond ASEAN to Burma

Through the International Council of Christian Churches, Rev Robert Thawm Luai, leader of the newly-formed Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Burma was introduced to us. The Lord moved us to a closer fellowship with him because of his Calvinistic faith. This led to our giving him a scholarship to come and take one semester's refresher course at FEBC. (He had obtained his B.Th. already from a fundamental Bible College in India.)

Having found a consensus of mind in the extension of God's Kingdom in Burma, in what we believed to be the fastest method of church growth, Life Church decided to support our Burmese brother to establish a Bible School — primarily to train workers for the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Burma of which he is Secretary-General. After completion of his refresher course at FEBC, this is what he reported upon returning to his homeland. This report on church growth was made, belatedly, in 1992:

After completion of my studies at the Far Eastern Bible College in Singapore, I returned to my country, Burma (now Myanmar) and arrived in Rangoon (now Yangon) safely on November 22, 1986. I was accompanied on my way home by Rev Goh Seng Fong as a delegate of Life B-P Church, on a visit to my country. We were warmly welcomed at the airport by leaders of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Burma (EPCB now EPCM).

## **Immanuel E-P Church Was Born**

On the Lord's day of November 23, 1986, we organised a new congregation at Yangon and thus the "Immanuel Evangelical Presbyterian Church" was born. We started with just two families. the Lord has blessed us richly in that we have 70 members now. Not less than 100 of God's people worship in our church every Sunday. I am the pastor of this church up to now.

I was pastoring the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Falam, Northern Chin State, Myanmar before becoming pastor of Immanuel Evangelical presbyterian Church of Insein, Yangon. But the 1986-87 General Assembly of the EPCB (now EPCM), held in Khiangrawn elected me to take care of the Immanuel E-P Church in Insein, Yangon.

## **Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology**

When I was a student at Far Eastern Bible College, I had the opportunity of sharing my vision with the principal. That vision was to establish a fundamental Bible College in Myanmar, as there was no fundamental school in my country at that time. The FEFST was born as a result of sharing this burden for the extension of Christ's Kingdom in Myanmar.

The General Assembly of the EPCM (1986-87) held in Khiangrawn voted to establish a Bible College in Yangon. Since the Lord gave me this burden, I left the Chin State and came down to Yangon. Thus, Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology was established on May 21, 1987. It was named in honour of my Alma Mater, the Far Eastern Bible College of Singapore, because our school is the offspring of FEBC and Life B-P Church.

The Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology is founded on and bounded by the Word of God. It is the only fundamental and reformed theological Bible School in

Myanmar. It now represents all evangelical churches in our country. The FEFST offers BTh, GTh and CTh diplomas. I am the founding principal-cum-president of FEFST in addition to being general secretary of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Myanmar (EPCM) and pastor of the Immanuel E-P Church, Insein, Yangon.

The Lord mightily blessed our school. In the beginning, we had only 17 students. Now we have 80 students with 13 teaching staff and three office workers. Interestingly, the students come from many parts of Myanmar. They belong to 13 different denominations.

### **Students Preach And Teach**

During the 1990-91 summer holidays, the FEFST students returned to their respective native places to preach, to teach and to evangelize different churches covering six provinces or states. They restored 79 backsliders and saved 30 souls.

### **Burma (Now Myanmar) Evangelical Presbyterian Partnership Mission Was Born**

The sixth Annual General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Burma (now Myanmar) held at Cang El Zawl on February 24, 1989, formed a mission agency named “The Burma (now Myanmar) Evangelical Presbyterian Partnership Mission” and elected me as Field Director.

Under the supervision and guidance of BEPPMJ, we now have seven cross-cultural missionaries of which two are in Yangon division, one in Kyangin, Irrawady division, one in Chin State and three in Kale-Kabaw valley. Through this home mission three local churches were



*First Graduation Class, September 1992*



*New 4-Storey Building*

established and more than 20 Buddhists have so far been converted to Christ.

In conclusion, I wish to thank Far Eastern Bible College for the sound doctrine and reformed theology it has taught me and I would also like to say that all the above blessings were received through the prayers of the FEBC principal and Life Church.

Having read the above report, the reader will be amazed how this Bible School has grown so fast from 17 students to 80 in a matter of a few years. This growth is possible because Life Church has increased her liberality of support from S\$20,000 to S\$25,000 per annum whereby a third house was rented to accommodate the physical increase. Moreover, we have also accorded their request to purchase the first house (College headquarters) at the price of S\$100,000. This ownership gives them stability and assurance of continued growth.

The story of how the S\$100,000 was raised, to the glory of God, must be told. In response to the need of the said sum, the pastor took upon himself to find S\$30,000. There was a lack of S\$70,000 which seemed to weigh heavily on the Session, the governing body of the Church. The reason was Life Church was still substantially indebted over the purchase of Beulah House, an adjoining property to the main Church.

A lady member of Life Church who calls herself "Old Lifer" had given a free loan of \$70,000 to the Beulah House Fund. Reading from the Church Weekly that there was a need of a further \$70,000 for Burma, she called the Pastor the next Monday morning. "Please transfer my loan as a gift to the Burma Fund." Thus the burden was lifted. If ever there was a murmur, it was now turned into praise.

How God had similarly delivered Life Church in the acquisition of Beulah House costing \$7.2 million is told in

"Chronicles of Conquest," a six-month record, week after week, of His saving acts. This book has helped not a few in gathering funds for their Church building projects.

Life Church and Far Eastern Bible College have grown up together inseparable like Siamese twins. The work of Life Church is linked to FEBC and the outreach of FEBC is supported by Life Church. Both are here seen closely involved in a Bible College Movement, which has spurred the growth of the African Church.

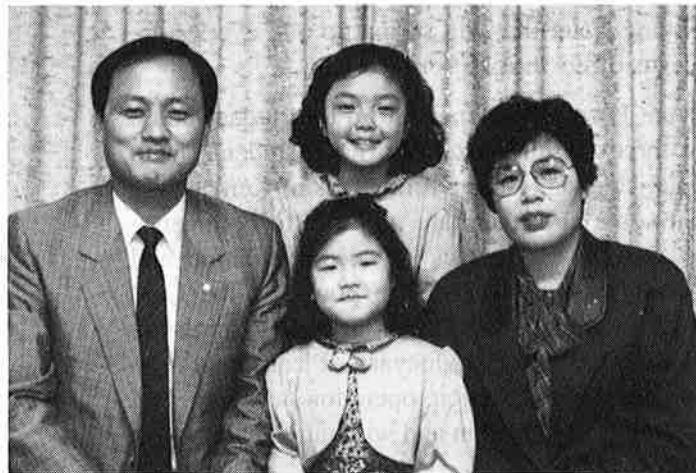
We see from the above account on Burma how the Gospel is now greatly accelerated in this hermit country through the graduates of the Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology. (In September 1992 it had its first 15 graduates who are now scattered in the fields.)

## Bible College Movement in Africa

Borrowing Burma as a mirror let us see how FEBC and Life Church are extending the Kingdom growth in Africa. Here is the report of Rev Mark Kim, B.Agriculture, Dip, Th., B.Th., who is new principal of the Bible College of East Africa, Nairobi:

In November 1989 my family and I left the beautiful clean and green Lion city - Singapore. That was a difficult moment leaving behind us friends and ministries. I was sad that I had to cease my training at the Far Eastern Bible College.

After a crash candidate school with the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions at Philadelphia, USA, we finally arrived at Nairobi, Kenya on 30 March 1990. Our mission field is the Bible College of East Africa. More than two years have quickly passed by since we came, and as I write this article I bow in humble adoration of God's manifold blessings bestowed upon us.



**Pray  
For The  
KIM  
Family**



Kyung Soo  
Mark

Ha Yong - Deborah  
Chan Mi - Esther

Hang Sook Rhee  
Hannah

The campus at BCEA is much more beautiful and pleasant than it was before - bushes and tall grasses are cleared and cut regularly, cement walkways laid along each building, water tanks installed, trees and plants, and a basketball court. Thank God for the nice environment. We need to continue to upkeep and maintain this place as it has been said, "Cleanliness is next to holiness!"

One of the difficulties we face is the shortage of water supply. For many months in a year, there is no rain or insufficient of it. The land becomes very dry. Crops die. The situation this year is worst. There is a terrible drought and scarcity of food. As a result, some schools are already closed. However, we thank the Lord for His merciful provision of water through a nearby factory which has a borehole. We are most grateful to God for blessing us with an artesian well recently. This project is possible through the hilarious and sacrificial giving of God's people. Now we can pump water out of the ground for daily consumption. What a relief! May this blessing be a constant reminder that our soul needs to be refreshed daily too by "the living water that will spring up into everlasting life" which Jesus offers in John 4:14.

Praise the Lord for the increase in the student-body; from twenty three to thirty-six. We have students from Zaire, Ethiopia, Uganda, and the rural areas of Kenya. We are sorry that some applicants are not able to commence school this year due to the lack of accommodation and some unforeseen circumstances. We pray that the Lord will lift off all hindrances in order that more ministers could be trained to go into His vineyard. Please pray with us for the ministry here; direction, operation, teaching, and training of future leaders within and without Kenya.

In addition to the ministry at the Bible College, we have Bible classes on Sundays for children, young adults and adults, one worship service in the morning and another in the evening. The Lord has definitely encouraged our

hearts with the increase of attendance on Sundays. When we first came, the Sunday school was unorganised, and only about thirty to forty people attended the service. These days, we have eight Bible classes. Most of the teachers are our college students. The average attendance is seventy at the Sunday school and ninety at the worship service. Praise the Lord!

Presently, we have five missionary-teachers. One of them is Miss Jenny Ong from Singapore. She is also a graduand of FEBC. Her coming is an answer to our prayers and has eased many aspects of workload. We thank God for the opportunity of partnership in service. Please continue to pray with us for more labourers to be sent to this field to cope with the ever-increasing demands. One of the ways God is going to answer this prayer of ours is to patiently wait for the return of Alex and Chota from FEBC upon completion of their studies. Therefore, we do sincerely hope that my Alma Mater will always be an open door for the further training and equipping of our students.

The more I reflect on the work and the longer I serve in this field, the more I appreciate and understand the difficulties and heartaches the principal and his wife face at FEBC.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him (Psalm 126:5,6).

Another on the staff of BCEA, as noted earlier, is Miss Jenny Ong who graduated from FEBC with a BTh in 1991.

Time was when a missionary was always thought of to be a white man or a white woman. Today Korea, with 2,000 missionaries sent out of the country, is foremost among Asian countries to go into all the world. FEBC has contributed to the training of Rev Kim and in its stride Jenny Ong, one of

Singapore's daughters and the first to Africa. What can a Singapore girl contribute to church growth in Africa? Jenny Ong relates her apprentice experience:

Last year this date (November 13), I left Singapore for Kenya. Never have I been away from home for such a long period, and I think it is going to be longer - another three years! How should I express my feelings about the year? It has passed by quickly, but oftentimes very slowly with "sweet and sour" experiences! The purpose of this letter is to share with you some of the things I do here. This is with the hope of seeking your understanding why I am very slow in corresponding with you. I do hope too, that it will serve to rally intelligent and specific prayer support from you. I am very sure that without your remembrance of me before the Father in heaven, I cannot survive! Therefore, I want to say "Thank you" first of all.

The months of July to early September were very cold. Everybody wore thick or winter clothing. Yours truly likewise had a cardigan on most of the time, and occasionally a piece of winter clothing. This is very unusual for one who comes from humid Singapore. They say winter in Nairobi starts the end of June. It is a pity that there is no snow! The other months are dry. Please pray that our bodies will adapt to the weather.

At the Bible College I teach an average of eight hours per week. Between classes I try to administer office work, and get lessons ready for the next class. The weekend is kept busy with accounts and preparations for the Sunday ministry...

My church ministry is overseeing the children's work and teaching the young adults' Bible class. Some of the college students and church members are Sunday school teachers. I meet with them each Sunday sharing the lesson to be taught for next week. This is because of the great lack of materials and resources for each class. The

other students, who are not involved in teaching, are given training and instructions to serve in the refreshment and ushering teams. For a couple of weeks now, I am teaching a catechism class, preparing three infants and three adults for baptism on Thanksgiving Day, November 22, 1992.

Interspersed with the routine were occasions in which I could laugh, at my own stupidity/ignorance or fright. Once I saw cheddar cheese in a supermarket. I took it to the cashier and paid for it, as though I had found gold. Later I realized that it was very expensive - 1.5 kgs cost approximately US\$43.00! Then I said to myself that never again would I take anything from the shelf and pay for it until I had first consulted Mrs Kim.

Please hold your jaw before reading on. Do you believe that I almost killed a snake? It was more than a foot long. While walking to the office, I noticed that something was moving between my legs. When I stopped to look at it, it lay very still. I quickly rushed to the storeroom, took a broom (made of leafy twigs), and put it on top of the snake's head, letting it coil inside. Then I went to the storeroom again to get a panga (a machete, or flat long knife used for cutting branches), and kept hitting its head. Its left eye flew out. At this time one of our visitors approached, and I pointed out to him the "dead" snake. He calmly replied, "Oh, be careful, that's a cobra. This is the way to kill a snake." Reaching out for the panga, he chopped off its head. He picked up the snake with a stick, and the blood dripped, dripped, and dripped.

Time will not permit us to relate the stories of other Bible Colleges linked to FEBC. Suffice it to mention two native sons of Kenya who trained at FEBC and each had obtained a good report.

#### 1. Stephen Masila writes

Paul the apostle to the Gentiles admonished and encouraged his young, spiritual son, Timothy, in II Timothy 2:2 that "the things that thou hast heard of me

among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” This verse illustrates the fervent faithfulness of FEBC since its inception in 1962. For all these thirty years FEBC has patiently and constantly been committing God’s Word to faithful men and women all over the world. And I thank the Lord for I am one of them.

II Timothy 3:1-5, 4:1-8 reminds me of the 14th graduation message on July 13th, 1983 which was “Theological Training in Perilous Times” delivered by Rev Dennis Shelton, Principal of John Knox Theological College Sydney, Australia. I don’t regret that the Lord sent me to FEBC because what I heard from my faithful lecturers for those three years have been of tremendous help in my pastoral and teaching tasks. I have got an awful responsibility of committing God’s inerrant and infallible Word to my students who in return will commit to the future generations. Yes, the man of God is expected to be faithful to his deposit, the glorious, saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. I am not only to keep it; treasure it in my heart but to earnestly commit it to faithful men even as my Alma Mater has been doing for these three decades. The responsibility of any biblical, fundamental conservative theological school, college or seminary is not to preserve the truth in “a musty museum, but to proclaim it to the teeming masses.”

I gratefully thank the Lord for the teaching of “the sincere milk of the word, which is unadulterated,” that is, “nothing mixed with it” which I received from FEBC.

Ever since I returned from Singapore July 1983, I have been serving my Lord as a pastor as well as a teacher. I am by the grace of God, the Principal of Africa Church Reformed Bible Institute and currently pastor of Africa Church Kituluni. For six month I pastored in Nairobi, the capital city of our country, Kenya.

From 1984 up to this year 28 graduates have finished their studies from this Institute. These graduates are actively involved in God's work. Currently there are 20 students with six teachers. Four new students will join the Institute in September this year. Among these six teachers, three are missionaries from United States who are members of Independent Gospel Missions. One of them is Dr Bovard's son. They are greatly helping us in teaching. Rev Richard Kivai is also a teacher. We will have our graduation this year on 5th December 1992, five will graduate. Pray for us for without His enabling grace we can do absolutely nothing for "it is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6:63). Pray for us that we may discharge our duty and responsibility in the power of the strengthening Spirit. Yes, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech 4:16).

To those who are graduating this year may you go out with a burdened heart to discharge the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to this sin-stricken world. May you stand firm and "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

A fable tells about a bear whose cubs asked, "Mother, which foot shall we put forward first?" She answered, "Shut up and walk!" Some are so careful about how to walk by faith that they never walk. Therefore may you at once put into practice all that which you have gained from this "School of the sons of prophet."

Finally may you go from this very unique and fundamental College with this conviction and challenge knowing that, "God is looking for men who are big enough to be small enough to be used of God in a big way." D L Moody said, "The beginning of greatness is to be little, the increase of greatness is to be less, and the perfection of greatness is to be nothing." Go out as a servant of God ready to obediently do His will and work. Yes, let each

one of us recognize that the FEBC responsibility to the future generation is to faithfully take heed to Paul's words to his spiritual son Timothy, "The things that thou hast heard of me (from FEBC lecturers by way of application) among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." May the Lord bless you and be with you.

2. Michael Koech continues:

"... And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear ..." I Peter 3:15

Although Christianity has been in East Africa for more than a hundred years, many Christians today cannot give an answer to every man. This calls for more teachers and preachers.

Many pulpits are filled with untrained pastors and many churches are filled with nominal Christians. We make every effort to fill this gap. Since I left FEBC five years ago, my energies have been concentrated on the task of teaching and preaching. The same year I came from Singapore my church, known as the Africa Gospel Unity Church, opened a Bible school at Bomet in Western Kenya where most of the churches are located. I began to teach in September 1987, and became the principal of the school in January 1990. We have had two graduation exercises and six who have graduated are now pastors. In addition to regular students we have vacation school for the lay preachers, similar to FEBC's Basic Theology for Everyone. However, ours is a week long intensive course held twice a year. We usually have an average of fifteen students in each session. So far, three have graduated from this school.

Besides the work at the Bible school, I also pastor a church at Silibwet, a short distance from the school. Here I teach Sunday school and preach every Lord's day and have Bible classes on Thursdays. We also have active youth and

women fellowships. The Lord has enabled us recently to build a permanent church replacing the old wooden one.

Since most of our pulpits are filled with lay preachers, there is need for an overseer. This additional responsibility was given me after my ordination. To make things work we gather all these churches in two groups once every month for fellowship and Lord's supper and baptism twice a year. The committee in charge of this congregation, of which I am chairman, also organise evangelistic outreach every month. Two whole days at a time, our Bible school students are part of the evangelism team. Part of my duties as an overseer is to counsel couples who are preparing for marriage.

One of the lessons emphasized at our Alma Mater in relation to church work is to be self-supporting, so as much as I can, we teach our church members to work towards this goal. So far our Bible school is supported entirely by local churches in regard to everyday necessities. The only area we have not been able to support is the Library. We do have sufficient books for now, we purchased some but most of them were donated by Christians outside our country. We still have some empty shelves and our students need some good books when they graduate.

We get little support from our churches for personal needs. So we supplement this with some small-scale farming. We plant vegetables, fruits and grains for our food. We also keep some cows for milk. Though this demands our time, we still give first priority to the Lord's work.

With this to do in our locality, we can do very little for missions outside our country. But we do not forget to pray for missionaries.

It is our prayer that through these efforts, our resources may be multiplied so that we can do more for the Lord in these days. Thus we can always give an answer for the hope that is in us with meekness and fear.

## **Alumni in Other Fields**

The FEBC was founded in September 1962. Up to September 1992 when a big Thanksgiving Service was held at her 19th Graduation Service, statistics showed there were 201 who graduated up to that date. Here are four alumni whose attainments must shed further light on FEBC's part in the promotion of church growth.

### **Korea**

Rev Han Joong Sik, FEBCer 1974, writes:

In my heart FEBC is always my spiritual home town, where great things are happening for God. We cannot escape the implication that what students believe and accept in theological schools is an index of what they will preach tomorrow. It is true that some changes as experience and time come their way, but generally the trend is sure. In a sense, therefore, I am naturally doing what I've learned from FEBC. I learned there, that "deep theology is the best fuel of devotion; it readily catches fire, and once kindled it burns long" (F W Faber). and theological education of FEBC is exactly what Abraham Kuyper said about. He said the study of theology could only be true and effective if three conditions were present. First, student and teacher alike must be regenerated by God's grace. The second condition is that the student of theology be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Finally, theology is not done in isolation, but in the "communion of the saints" and the active fellowship of brothers and sisters in Christ.

Right after I came back to Korea, I started teaching as a seminary professor at the Presbyterian College and

Theological Seminary and Young Nam Theological Seminary. I taught in seminaries for nearly ten years.

At Christmas 1981 I was called by my alma mater. So I moved to the Soong Sil University which is the oldest university in Korea. Being a Christian university professor and the head chaplain I have to look after 8,000 souls. It requires hard and laborious work. Yet it is a worthwhile job. Teaching and preaching here is challenging. For life-searching, heart-searching, conscience-searching preachings are most rewarding tasks.

Every Lord's Day early morning I preach to the department store girls who are working even on Sundays. At 11.30 I teach Exodus to a youth group (about 200) of Young Nak Presbyterian Church which is my mother church.

I am following the counsel of Theodore Roosevelt who said, "If you wish to do something for your country in the future, do something for the youth of today." To give of ourselves in some dedicated service is to find the key to real and inexhaustible joy.

For the last 30 years, FEBC has helped many labourers from all over the world to prepare for their ministry. I have learned from FEBC such stimulating study of God's Word, His world, and His work and much spiritual exercise, growth and outreach.

I want you to know that your teaching and influence on my life and me are greatly appreciated. I am proud to be one of FEBCers. I will be talking about FEBC and praying for God's continued guidance and blessing on its service for Christ for a long time. Keep up the good work!

## **West Kalimantan, Borneo**

From the high level of University life let us go down to the riverine jungles of West Kalimantan (West Borneo) to hear what Kimiko Goto, FEBCer 1985, has to say:

I praise the Lord for His wonderful guidance since I graduated from FEBC.

The Lord led me to West Kalimantan in 1984 and used me as a missionary until I was obliged to leave there because of a visa problem in 1991.

The first few years the Lord guided me to serve as a lecturer at Far Eastern Bible Institute in Pontianak whose principal was Rev Andrias Djunaidi. It was a Bible School built with the financial support of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church.

In early 1988, the Lord led me to an interior village, where I served with West Kalimantan Pioneer Mission. It has been supported by Faith Bible Presbyterian Church (Rev Quek Kiok Chiang) for a long time.

There are sixteen churches, a Bible school, an orphanage and a hospital under the Mission. The Lord has been using each one of the institutions for His glory.

While I stayed there, I was privileged to serve especially with the Bible school, and the Orphanage.

At Mt Olive Bible School, I served as a teacher to train students who felt called to work at unevangelized interior villages in West Kalimantan. There were about thirty students and most of them were from the Dyak tribe. I enjoyed the work very much.

At Ebenezer Orphanage I was privileged to serve as a house mother and evangelist over thirty orphans and poor children. Most of them were also Dyaks.

The Orphanage has great purposes. One of them is to give opportunity of education, and another purpose is to

lead them to Christ in order that they may be useful for Him.

There I led in devotions every morning before breakfast and at prayer meetings four nights a week, so that they might hear the Word of God. They were also encouraged to join church activities, such as Sunday School, worship service and so on. Through these opportunities, since the orphanage was started, many were saved and some became pastors and evangelists. I thank the Lord for giving me a wonderful time with the children.

After I left them last year, the Lord encouraged me to write a book about my experiences in West Kalimantan. It was recently published by a Christian publishing company, the Word of Life Press in Tokyo. I praise the Lord for using the book for His glory among the Japanese people.

In March 1992, He opened a way for me to study at Biblical Theological Seminary in USA. I thank Him for giving me wonderful opportunities to study His Word again so as to equip myself further for the Lord's service. If it is the Lord's will, I would like to serve Him again in South East Asia after completing the course.

## Thailand

A third testimony we'd adduce is from Thailand the land of Buddha: Sirithorn Cheepnirand returned to FEBC for higher training:

After completing high school my desire was to be a nurse. I took the university entrance examination but failed. I was very disappointed. I began to question God for not helping me. However, I determined to try again the following year. In the meantime, I prayed hard for God's guidance in my life. After some time I came to know a Korean missionary. He suggested to me to go full-time in

the Lord's ministry. After training I could go back to my country to help in mission work. I prayed about it, and in January 1986 I entered FEBC. I spent three and a half years there.

In May 1989, I returned to my country, Thailand. I served at Thailand Evangelical Seminary, Bangkok. In the beginning, I was not satisfied with the work because the seminary had just started and there was a lack of staff. I had to manage the whole library myself and do office work. I murmured a lot for I felt my theological training was in vain.

One day, I attended a library work seminar. It was through this seminar that I realised my theological training could be put to much use in my job. God used this seminar to change my attitude towards my job. As it was already mentioned, library was not my only job. Sometimes I had to help in the kitchen. As I got more and more involved in the seminary because of great shortage of staff, I had to handle difficult decisions. Knowing God is always my strong tower, I learned then to pray before I started work.

Once, the principal requested me to draw a picture representing our seminary for an exhibition in Thailand and America. I was surprised because I had no experience in this area. Trusting in God, I decided to give myself a try. To my great surprise, this piece of art was even sent to America for exhibition. All these experiences strengthened my faith and love for God greatly. Life without Him would indeed be empty and aimless.

As the seminary grew, I began to realise the shortage of Thai lecturers. Most lecturers were foreigners, having much difficulties in communicating with the students. This need of the seminary burdened my heart to be a lecturer for the school. After much discussion with the principal, I decided to return to FEBC to further my study.

This is because apart from FEBC I could not find another seminary of sound doctrine.

Now, happily, I am back once again in my alma mater. FEBC is one school for which I am grateful. The school offers me not only theological knowledge but also a place to practise Christian love and care. Truly, from the bottom of my heart, I thank God for a very loving principal and his wife. Their love and kindness have wonderfully blessed me and many students.

All in all, I thank God for making me once again a part of this big FEBC family. I believe my further study here would equip me to serve the Lord better. Just as what my name “Srithorn” means, I would always shine as a star for my Lord. Amen.

## **Rhode Island, USA**

Last but not least is the testimony of a son of India now labouring with Indo-Chinese refugees in a cold corner of the United States. Rev George Kutty tells his story:

FAR EASTERN BIBLE COLLEGE graciously opened her arms and accepted me from Kerala, India in October 1975. I love Far Eastern Bible College because that is a place where God's Word is honoured. The tenacious loyalty of the Board members and teachers of the College to the infallible, inspired, and inerrant Word of God has profoundly inspired my life and ministry.

In 1979 the Lord led me to the United States to advance my theological studies. Since then I have graduated with a Diploma in Bible Theology, Teacher's Diploma, Bachelor of Bible Theology, etc.

By God's grace Kamala and I started a mission to the Laotian and other Indo-Chinese refugees settled in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1982. This mission has grown to become Grace Bible Church. God has blessed us

with many Laotian and Cambodian brothers and sisters throughout the years of tearful sowing here in Rhode Island. In 1991 the Spirit of God brought conversion to forty-three Laotians and two of them were Buddhist monks.

We believe that planting of fundamental churches after the Reformed tradition of Life B-P Church and FEBC, and training of converts among them are the greatest needs right now. We are totally committed to reach out to the 32,000 Indo-Chinese settled in Rhode Island.

Our work of charity to the poorest of the poor in Rhode Island has been taken notice of by the State authorities who now accord us six time-slots on the TV (free of charge). This has been a tremendous open door of opportunity for Kamala and me to minister daily to two million or more people who are potential audience with cable access living in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island area. America is flooded with TV preachers begging for money and playing gimmicks. It has been our policy not to ask money from our viewers but to preach and teach the unadulterated Word of Truth. It has brought greater recognition. To God be the glory.

In 1989 the New England School of Missions was established as a short term training centre to provide foundational teaching on Biblical Missions. I have been offering this teaching to lay leaders and pastors who are mission minded among the churches in New England.

Since I left FEBC the Lord has led me to preach to the nations of Nigeria, Jamaica, Barbados, Guyana, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia, and India. I thank God for expanding my vision and for increasing my zeal for missions throughout these years.

Once again, thank you, FEBC, for loving me, feeding me, and nourishing me with the pure doctrine and for making me a better man.

Please pray for Kamala and me that we may continue on persevering in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Your encouragement is much appreciated. Our address is: Rev George Kutty, 17 Friendship St., North Providence, R.I. 02904, USA.

## **From Earth's Uttermost Part Back to Our Lord's Birthplace**

In 1969-70 we became short term missionaries under the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions to Bethlehem, City Royal of David and of our Saviour's birth. Through this contact the Church at Bethlehem, mostly Arab Bible-Presbyterians, have endeared itself to us.

To discover the roots of the faith of these Arab Christians with whom we are now closely associated, the reader must be introduced to its founder, Dr Thomas A. Lambie. and the one to tell that story is Bonnie, wife of Dr Howard Carlson, with whom we had stayed in the same Mission House in Bethlehem. Dr and Mrs Carlson served for 12 years in Bethlehem, succeeding Dr Lambie. Under the caption, "His Life was a Poem," Bonnie Carlson reveals the depths of faith of the present Arab Church, through Dr Lambie. We have known him personally by visiting the Holy Land in 1950 in the company of ICCC leaders in a first study tour of Israel.

Bonnie Carlson writes:

The life of Dr. Thomas A. Lambie was characterized by the corn of wheat, which in dying brings forth much fruit (John 12:24). His daily dying to self brought forth sweet fruit of the Spirit in his own life, and sheaves of redeemed souls brought into the Kingdom of our Lord, of numbers which cannot be reckoned. Beloved for his

selfless life and steadfast service, he was a man of faith and prayer.

He was born of godly parents in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1885, and from childhood dedicated his life to God. After completing medical school and two years internship he began his foreign service at the eager age of 22. Despite malarial mosquitoes outside and ants indoors, Charlotte Claney became his bride and much-valued companion. Together with their two children they entered new territory in southern Sudan on the upper Sobat River, bordering on Ethiopia. Here, a pioneer missionary in the truest sense, he exercised great faith in God, a keen sense of humor, and a contagious enthusiasm.

He buried himself in those Sudanese jungles, undaunted by wild beasts and disease. Eventually, in 1919, he was invited into Ethiopia, a land virtually untouched by the gospel. The Lambies were the first Christian missionaries there, with the exception of one who was confined to Addis Ababa, the capital. The doctor began more than a dozen new stations and a large hospital (the first worthy of the name in all the country) in Addis Ababa. Within a few years there were fifty stations with eighty workers, and Dr Lambie was appointed the emperor's personal physician.

Then Mussolini attacked Ethiopia, and the emperor asked Dr Lambie to organize and head the Ethiopian Red Cross. Eventually, with Ethiopia's defeat, the Lambies were forced out of their adopted country for good, and Dr Lambie became "the doctor without a country." For he had died to himself again in relinquishing his American citizenship and taking the oath of allegiance to Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia; this to secure property-holding rights for his mission, and to demonstrate his complete identification with the Ethiopian people. By special acts of Congress he regained his American citizenship and returned to the Sudan.

Ordered to retire, with broken health at 57 years of age, he chose to obey the Great Commission to the end, rather than serve and witness at home. "Swords up to the gates of Heaven" was his watchword.

He went on to found the Holy Land Mission consisting of a 95-bed tuberculosis sanatorium, a clinic and nurses' home in the Baraka Valley; and a church in Bethlehem. This he accomplished solely in the strength of the Lord, as he suffered the loss of his first wife en route to Palestine in 1946, another health breakdown, and loss of all possessions in the partition of Palestine. In 1947 the Lord gave him a second help-mate, Irma Schneck, an associate of missionary days in Ethiopia. With humility and tenderness, following the example of the Master Physician, he made himself always available to minister to the souls and bodies of his 7,300 neighbours in the Ain Arrub refugee camp. The stimulating influence of his beautiful testimony was further multiplied as he spoke in churches and conferences around the world, penned six books, and made the Bible live for visiting pilgrims.

April 14, 1954 the indomitable spirit, which had long ruled the frail body, took its flight. He was resting at the Garden Tomb, scene of the Lord's resurrection, and speaking of his Easter message he was to give there in four days time. Even as he spoke, he quietly answered his Lord's summons to that Celestial City.

"With Christ, which is far better."

It is reported that the Sanatorium Dr Lambie established in the Baraka Valley had in its heyday an overall staff numbering 70-80, while the 95 beds were fully occupied. But times have changed and now the old Sanatorium is converted as a Conference Centre and Hospice for pilgrims from distant lands. On the other hand, the Church he built at Bethlehem on the Hebron Highway, a stone's throw from Rachel's Tomb, is a flourishing centre for the

Arab converts of Dr Lambie's ministry, and a constant sanctuary for Christian tourists to the Holy Land.

From our contact with the Independent Board missionaries and the Arab brethren and sisters, we have developed an increasing affinity with the Baraka Bible-Presbyterian Church in Bethlehem and the Baraka Conference Centre in the Berachah Valley (II Chronicles 20:26), 10 miles south of Bethlehem. We have made full use of the Baraka Conference Centre in four Pilgrimages to the Holy Land, 1983-1993. Pilgrims of the 2nd Trip to Israel, 1987, were touched by the Arab brethren's effort to acquire land at Beit Sahour (the Shepherd's Field) to build a second B-P Church. Accordingly they collected US\$30,000 which enabled the Arab brethren to acquire over 10,000 sq ft of an olive orchard near to a Greek Orthodox Church. Church growth is as fascinating as a meandering river! As a river flows on and on to sea, let us not stop till we go out from Bethlehem the origin of our Saviour's first coming to earth's farthest horizon at His Second Coming.

## THE GREAT COMMISSION

Go into the world, into all the wide world,  
And tell the joyful news to ev'ry perishing soul,  
And tell the joyful news to ev'ry perishing soul.

For you I have sent into all the wide world,  
And you shall be my witnesses from Jerusalem,  
And you shall be my witnesses from Jerusalem.

But first receive power, the Spirit of God,  
And you'll go through Judea, Samaria, all the earth,  
And you'll go through Judea, Samaria, all the earth.

Go ye into all, into all nations,  
And make them My disciples, and baptise them for Me,  
And teach them all My Word, for I'm with you to the end.



*Life-FEBC 4th Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, March 1993*



*Young People's Camp of Baraka BP Church, Bethlehem, June 1993*



*Land at the Shepherd's Field donated to the Arab Church.*

## **CHAPTER V**

### **ON THE GO VIA ANTIOCH**

The Apostolic Church grew by leaps and bounds in the power of the Holy Spirit. In one decade it had spread as far north as Antioch, several hundred miles from Jerusalem to the north. From Antioch Barnabas and Saul were commissioned on a First Missionary Journey westwards in 41 AD (according to Scofield); which led to the Second and the Third. This finally took Paul to Rome, and from Rome the early church spread to the whole of Europe. Antioch is the pattern for B-P church growth.

Hitherto, we have told the story of Life Church on the Go in missions the very year of her founding and we could not stop until that story of the Gospel on the Go ended back in Bethlehem. Let us now retrace our steps back to Singapore, our Jerusalem. Here church growth was logically the most intensive, for out of Life Church sprouted many branches, as the Chinese saying goes, like bamboos after the spring rains.

Here is the order of branches that grew out of the Mother Church locally:

Sembawang	1957	Mt Carmel	1960
Zion	1957	FEBC	1962
Galilee	1960	Life (Chinese)	1965
Jurong	1960	Calvary	1970
Tekong	1960	Sharon	1971

Grace	1976	New Life	1983
CLBC	1976	Tabernacle	1987
Life (Indonesian)	1982	Beulah	1990
Life (Tamil)	1983	Maranatha	1990
Life (Thai)	1983	Berean	1992

Of the 44 offshoots from Gilstead Road in the last 43 years, it is here seen how 20 have grown up in the good soil of Singapore Island. Of these immediate branches that have sprouted further, so that the B-P Church has become a fruitful vine and “sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river (Psalm 80:11), Calvary is a foremost example of extended church growth. Spiritually speaking Calvary has made a great leap forward from Jerusalem to Antioch. Calvary is a fruitful vine, indeed, “The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were the goodly cedars” (Psalm 80:10).

Let Dr S H Tow, founding pastor of Calvary B-P Church, recount the steps of church growth from the date of her branching out of Life Church, 1970.

## CHURCH GROWTH: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

(“On the go via Antioch”)

*by Dr S H Tow*

### Introduction

When Life Church sent out a band of men in 1969 to found Calvary, little did we dream that a 20th century Antioch was in the making. Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church in these past 20-odd years has become a centre of Gospel outreach, a fruitful “sending church”, and a bastion of “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

Like the Biblical mustard seed “which indeed is the least of all seeds” it has grown into a tree, “so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof” (Matt 13:32). Growth in numbers however does not necessarily extend God’s everlasting Kingdom,

unless it is soundly and securely founded on the Word of God. Thank God Calvary has been preserved all these years, "holding fast the faithful word" (Tit 1:9).

Church growth of the Biblical pattern does not come by attending a course in "missiology" in some high-powered "School of Missions". Church growth is simply the work of the Holy Spirit through obedient men and women, heeding our Lord's command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. It is the founding of Bible-believing God-honouring churches, standing on the Word of God against the floodtide of the end time apostasy now sweeping around the world.

## PRINCIPLES IN CHURCH GROWTH

The Word of God gives clear guidelines on church growth. These have proved true and effective during the course of Calvary's 24 years. For our present purpose ten major Biblical principles of church growth have been identified.

### 1     **God Calls**

The initiative in church growth rests with our all-wise and sovereign God. He knows who are His, and whom to call. No man should attempt to do God's work who has not received a clear call from God. The Gospel work belongs to Him and He must have a part - a vital and central part - in it. "Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it" (Ps 127:1).

We do well to heed Biblical precedents:

- a     **God called Isaiah.** "... the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother ..." (Isaiah 49:1).
- b     **God called Paul.** "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen ..." (Gal 1:15,16).

In 1938 the Lord called me through His servant John Sung. He laid his hands on me, and prayed for me. This event has shaped my whole course of life, leading to my ordination into the holy ministry in 1980. "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim 1:12).

The Lord has given Calvary many fellow labourers who have received God's call. Together we strive for the faith of the gospel extension of God's everlasting Kingdom. May God call more men and women to serve Him in these end times, before the comes when no man can work.

## 2 Man Responds

The man of God, in close touch with the Spirit of God, responds to His call readily and decisively. God's call is irresistible:

- a **Isaiah heard** the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? His response was "Here am I, send me" (Isaiah 6:8).
- b **Paul, confronted by the Lord** on the Damascus road said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). From that moment he became a captive for life and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In 1969 the call of God came and I left the "hallowed halls of academia" for the gospel's sake. Had I forgotten my consecration of 30 years ago? By no means, but the Lord had His perfect plan. After serving in the University for some 15 years, and having had a taste of academic life, the time had come to enter more fully into the service of God.

The years have flown by, twenty-four blessed and fruitful years of growth. All who have been with Calvary from its earliest years have seen the Lord's hand leading and directing at every step. Our response to the Gospel call was but a small step in God's overall plan. A crucial and key factor was His faithfulness. In all this we are reminded of the weeping prophet's words: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lam 3:22,23).

## 3 God opens doors

Doors of gospel opportunity are not ours to open. It is the Lord's to open, the Lord of the harvest; we are but "labourers together with God" (John 3:9). One precious lesson we have learnt is patience. Questions such as "What shall we do? Where shall we go?" demand an answer. Through prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving (Phil 4:6) the Lord has without fail to our aid. But we need to wait patiently upon the Lord.

Looking back over 24 years, we say, "Great is Thy faithfulness!" The Lord who opened Gospel doors for the Apostle Paul hath done great things for us for which we are glad. He has led us to Jurong and Pandan Gardens in Singapore, to Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Australia, China, the Philippines and London. In each place we have seen God's hand leading on.

#### **4      "Go ye therefore!"**

Men, and not angels, are commissioned to "preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom 10:15). Church growth is committed to godly men, faithfully obeying the call of Christ to "go into all the world". But before going there has to be preparation for the task ahead.

When Isaiah was called, he bemoaned his own wretched sinful condition, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips" (Is 6:5). God cleansed him, then he offered himself: "Here am I; send me."

#### **God gave a vision**

Friday afternoons were kept free of clinical commitments and wholly set apart for the visitation of absent and sick members. That particular afternoon Rev Philip Heng (then Associate Pastor of Life Church) and I drove through Jurong Town. The sight of high rise apartment blocks soaring skyward on either hand appeared as a vision from heaven. It brought to mind our Lord's words:

"Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest" (Jn 4:35).

At the next meeting of the Life Church Session a committee of five "Lifers" was formed to spearhead the gospel advance into the western sector of Singapore. The vision of the "human beehives" in Jurong Town, a field white already to harvest, moved the Session to take that crucial step to send our small group forth in obedience to our Lord's commandment.

To men of the world such a move would appear foolish. What could five inexperienced men do? But our confidence was in the Lord, remembering that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the

weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor 1:25), and "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matt 19:26).

As the Apostle Paul "was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19), should not his example spur us also to answer the call of the thousands in Jurong waiting for the Gospel day to dawn? Clearly a door to the west was opening. Our prayer was, "Lord, here we are, send us!"

Our Committee met and prayed that the Lord of the harvest would be in full control: "Lord, guide us in the way we should go, and direct us to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named or to build upon another man's foundation" (Rom 15:20) The Lord laid on our hearts a clearly defined objective which was the salvation of the lost. Church growth must never degenerate into sheep stealing.

### **God had prepared a man**

The Lord directed our footsteps to the Chairman of Jurong Town Corporation, a Mr W S Woon. He received us warmly, heard our proposition and sized up our need. Pointing to a large wall map of Jurong Town, Mr Woon identified a piece of vacant land earmarked for religious use. "Write to me, and your request will be considered."

Our application was approved in a matter of weeks. A piece of land measuring 24,500 sq ft at the corner of Corporation Drive and Tao Ching Road was assigned to Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church on a 60-year lease for the construction of a church complex! Praise the Lord for His wonderful provision.

### **Arise and build!**

Within the stipulated 2-year period a 3-storey church complex was built and services were inaugurated on January 1, 1974. By the liberal giving of God's people Calvary was not burdened with a large residual debt. Here in Jurong was our Antioch.

### **5      "Sow in tears, reap in joy" (Ps 126:5)**

Church growth comes not but by sowing the good seed of the Word of God. This principle is vital and foundational. In the steps of Paul the wise masterbuilder we have laid a firm foundation which is Jesus Christ the Word of God (1 Cor 3:10,11).

On this foundation we have built for 24 years, and as long as the Lord tarries we continue to do so.

In the present universal “falling away” (2 Thess 2:3) we thank God for preserving us in the most holy faith. Only by His grace have we been kept from the intrusion of “another gospel” (Gal 1:6,7), and to persevere in sound Gospel preaching, to hold fast the faithful word (Tit 1:9), and to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Tim 4:2-4). These words have been our unfailing guide.

Faithful sowing is “to declare all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:27), to feed the flock of God, and to defend it against wolves (Acts 20:28-30). Faithful sowing must precede fruitful reaping of “a hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold” (Matt 13:8).

“Holding fast the faithful word,” Calvary continues to sow in every place where God has sent us through open Gospel doors. God’s words encourage our hearts: “Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name” (Rev 3:8).

We shall ever keep His word, and never deny His name as we go forward to sow in tears.

## **6      “Feed the flock of God” (1 Pet 5:2)**

With what shall we feed the flock of God but with the Word of God, which is milk (1 Pet 2:2), bread (Jn 6:32-35), and meat (Heb 5:12). Our congregations have been fed with the life-sustaining Word at every available opportunity by every possible means:

- a)     Sunday preaching
- b)     Bible memorization
- c)     Weekly exhortation with God’s Word through the Weekly Publication
- d)     Exhortation/exposition of the Word at midweek Prayer Meeting, Family Worship/Fellowship
- e)     Basic Bible Knowledge Class
- f)     Bible Study Groups

- g) Fellowship Groups
- h) Daily Bible Reading, with RPG notes
- i) Bible Camps
- j) Special meetings, Conferences, with invited speakers/teachers.

Prayer is an indispensable and equally vital component in church growth. In the early church the apostolic band recognized it. "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4). From the day of Pentecost the infant church grew "by leaps and bounds." The people continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers ... And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:42, 47).

Here we have the Scriptural pattern for church growth. We find no place for sociopolitical action, liberation theology, entertainment evangelism, or AD 2000 ecumenical evangelism.

Our sufficiency is in the Lord, and in the Word of life.

## 7     **"God gave the increase" (1 Cor 3:6)**

In God's work there must be cooperation and collaboration with men of likemind and of the same precious faith. The apostle's words enlighten on this point: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (1 Cor 3:6). "For we are labourers together with God" (1 Cor 3:9).

The faithful sowing of the Gospel seed will not be in vain. This is our Lord's promise (Matt 13:8). The sowing may be attended with tears as we encounter difficulties along the way, but we must not be discouraged. God's Word assures us: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps 126:6).

God's servants must learn to sow in tears, to endure hardness, even as our Lord, "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb 12:2). Our Lord saw ahead of Him the joy of "bringing many sons unto glory" (Heb 2:10), the joyous reaping which would follow His painful sowing.

God has honoured the faithful sowing over 20 years by raising up  
a) six churches and b) six related gospel works:

- a) Churches established
  - 1 Calvary (Jurong) 1973
  - 2 Calvary (Pandan) 1979
  - 3 Calvary Jaya (Kuala Lumpur) 1984
  - 4 Bible-Presbyterian Church of Western Australia 1986
  - 5 Bethel Bible-Presbyterian Church, Melbourne 1986
  - 6 Calvary Batam (P Batam, Indonesia) 1990
- b) Related Gospel Works (receiving support)
  - 1 Bukit Panjang Gospel Outreach
  - 2 Kulai Besar B-P Church (part support)
  - 3 North Thailand
  - 4 Saipan (work among mainland Chinese workers)
  - 5 Adelaide (part support to Hope B-P Church)
  - 6 London (part support)

## **8      “Watch ... and warn”**

The flock of God is in constant danger from the Adversary and his agents. The apostle Paul saw the peril coming to the Ephesian church and sounded the warning. His words would serve very well for the church which wishes to remain true to the Lord in this day:

“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears” (Acts 20:29-31).

Calvary is blessed of the Lord with a Session which has faithfully watched over the flock, and taken a stand of Biblical separation (2 Cor 6:17) from the error and deception of ecumenism, new evangelicalism, charismatism, Romanism, and other false isms.

By the space of 20 years our leaders have held fast the faithful word (Tit 1:9), and ceased not to warn every one "night and day with tears." By God's grace we have been enabled to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), and to keep watch over the flock.

God with us, we shall defend the flock against wolves, false prophets, false teachers, false Christs, so that they may be without spot and blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Pet 3:14).

## **9     "Commit thou to faithful men" (2 Tim 2:2)**

No church can grow and prosper without a succession of good and strong leaders for future generations. The apostle Paul, church planter and wise masterbuilder, was ever mindful of this basic need. His instructions to Timothy are vital for church growth:

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim 2:1-3).

And who is sufficient for the continuing task of the church in teaching, nurturing, reproofing, correcting, instructing from week to week, and year after year? Leaders such as the apostle are all too conscious of their own transience, and the need to train up a generation of leaders for the future - faithful men who share the same vision, and conviction.

Calvary has sustained its growth over 20 years by God's grace. Our prayers and perseverance in training have ensured a supply of younger leaders to whom we may pass on the Gospel torch in time to come. The role of the Far Eastern Bible College in equipping workers for God's vineyard is of inestimable value. Without FEBC the B-P Churches would fade away in a generation. We are reminded of our Lord's words: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt 9:37, 38).

So we press on in prayer until the Lord returns!

## **10    "And God is able"**

When God opens doors of Gospel opportunity, He also sends the needful supplies. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the

world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps 24:1). The Gospel chorus sings like this -

*He owns the cattle on a thousand hills,  
The gold in every mine.*

Need we who engage in His work be anxious over the supply of material needs? From the years of serving the Lord we have learnt that the real lack is not of **funds**, but of **faith**. We are saved by faith; we walk and work by faith; and we accomplish great things for God by faith. Faith is the victory!

By faith, then, we instruct all our people in the Biblical principle of giving to God, in the support of His work. The prophet Malachi reminds us with these words: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal 3:10).

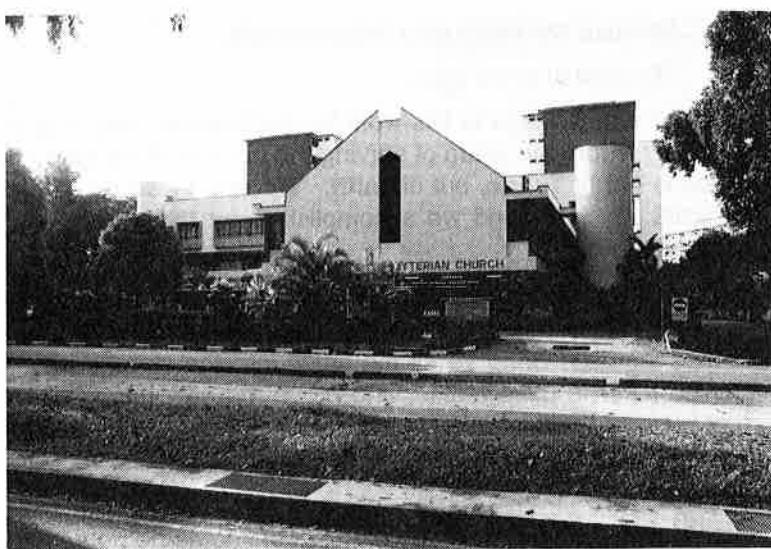
The apostle Paul says, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor 9:7,8).

May it please the Lord to see Calvary as a gospel-minded church, a sending church, and a giving church. What we have given is but a small portion of what we have first received from the good hand of our bounteous and loving God. Jehovah jireh!

## Conclusion

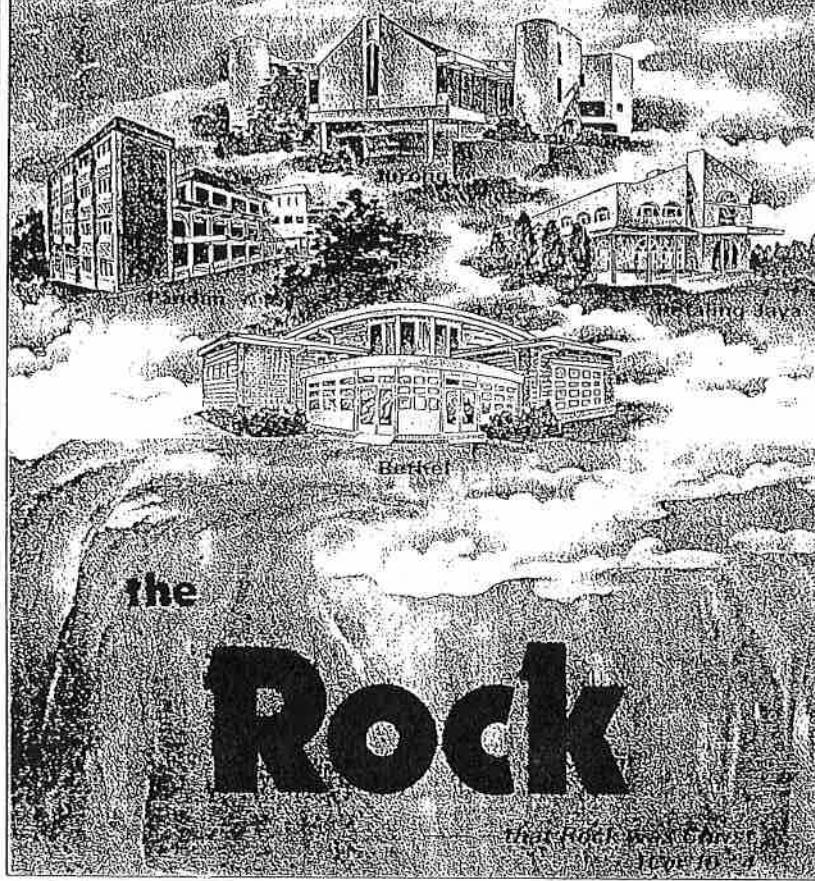
The church grows

*when members wait upon the Lord in believing prayer,  
when they hear God's call and respond cheerfully;  
when they go because the love of Christ constraineth;  
when they are willing to spend and be spent for God;  
when they give to God as freely as God gives to them.*



*Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church, Singapore*

# Built Upon



## 25 Blessed Years

1969 - 1994

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **JERUSALEM, WHITHER THE TRIBES GO UP**

*I was glad when they said unto me  
Let us go into the house of the Lord.  
Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.  
Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:  
Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,  
Unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the  
name of the Lord.* . . . . .      *Psalm 122:1-4*

In ancient Israel, Jersualem was not only where the throne was established, but also the centre of worship. The verses above from David's pen stress the importance of ascending (geographically and spiritually) to God's house to worship, to hear His Word, to give thanks.

In New Testament times, Jerusalem remained the centre of religion. The Church was inaugurated by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Here the early Church was consolidated with the Apostles preaching, baptising, and indoctrinating, confirming the Word with signs and wonders (Mark 16:20, Acts 4:30).

When a great persecution broke out over the Church in Jerusalem and the disciples were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, the apostles stayed put (Acts 8:1). The religious centre at Jerusalem remained intact. After Saul was converted, he was introduced to the Apostolic College in Jerusalem to seek their blessing (Acts 8:26-28). “Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied” (Acts 9:31).

From Jerusalem the Apostles sent Peter and John to consolidate the revival ministry of Philip the Evangelist (one of the Seven, Acts 6:5) in Samaria (Acts 8:14). From Jerusalem went forth Peter to Lydda. There he raised up Aeneas from his sick bed (Acts 9:33), whereby all who dwelt at Lydda and Saron turned to the Lord (Acts 9:35). Continuing from there Peter went to Joppa (Jaffa) where he resurrected Dorcas from the dead. From victory to victory, he pressed on to Caesarea. There he converted Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:48).

Meanwhile the Spirit led those who were scattered by the great Jerusalem persecution to Phenice, Cyprus and Antioch and converted “a great number” who turned to the Lord. When news of this great revival was received in Jerusalem, the Church sent forth Barnabas to confirm them in the faith (Acts 11:22). Together with Saul, Barnabas, representing the Apostles, taught the disciples for a whole year (Acts 11:26).

When the Church at Antioch had grown considerably after three years, heresy set in. “Certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved” (Acts 15:1). To settle this problem the Church at Antioch commissioned the two to go up to Jerusalem, unto the apostles and elders (Acts 15:2). Peter also came from his missionary itinerations. The doctrine of salvation by grace alone was much debated and once and for all

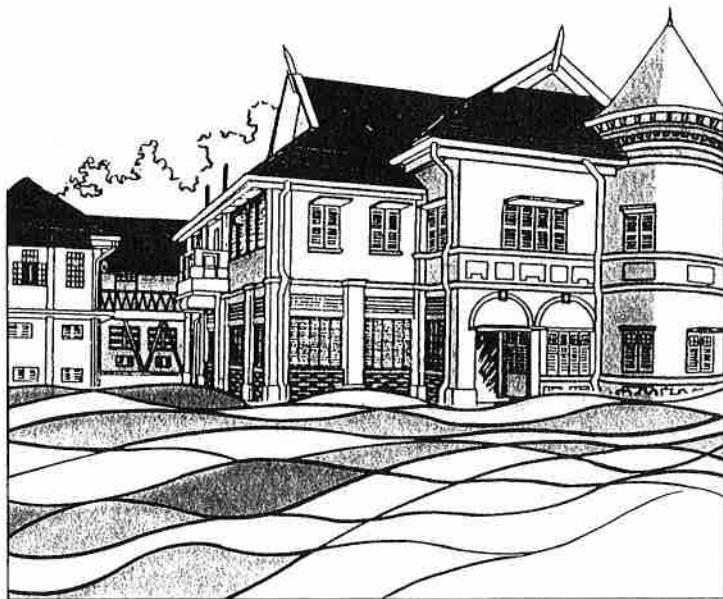
settled by the Apostles, with James the Just, the brother of the Lord, delivering the decree...

We have shown from the above account taken from Acts to prove how important Jerusalem was to the early Church. That is the pattern for any Church that is established in this present age. That is the pattern of the founding Church of the Bible-Presbyterian Movement in Singapore.

Thus, while we were on the go for the extension of God's Kingdom from the beginning, we did not neglect to consolidate the church that sent out the missionaries. While Life Church, founded at Prinsep Street in October 1950, possessed nothing, for we were worshipping on borrowed premises, we soon launched into a search for land to build a church of our own. We did not take the view of some daughter B-P Church founded a decade later that stressed establishing house churches as following the Apostolic pattern. We believed the house churches of Acts 4:42-47 were of a transitory nature, inasmuch as their communal living was no more mentioned soon thereafter. We believe that Church growth cannot take effect until the newly established Church is solidly consolidated. This is patterned after all that we have discovered of the Jerusalem Church from the outset of this chapter.

We believe in the building of a sizable Church upon a sizable property so that a growing congregation can come together to worship and fellowship. The Lord blessed our understanding and our faith, and confirmed it with the acquisition of 1 1/4 acres prime land at Gilstead Road. Here was built a handsome sanctuary, 116 ft x 50 ft, with bell tower and steeple and six pillars. Later, with the extension of a colonnaded corridor to the Kindergarten-College block, seating capacity was raised to 1,000. Today two services in English on the Lord's Day are held, on special occasions, with overflowing crowds. Had we believed in house churches, Church growth would be stunted in no time,

## Beulah House



SOUTH WEST ELEVATION

like planting a tree in a flower pot. Building an auditorium seating 1,000 is ideal for the growth of the Church.

When Life Church shifted out of Prinsep Street to Gilstead Road in 1962, we had a church complex which had a big auditorium and an annexe housing the Far Eastern Bible College, two parsonages, and a bookroom. In a matter of five years we had to build a three-storey extension to fill the need of a Kindergarten and more dorms and classrooms for the Bible College. As the years rolled by these facilities were taxed to their limit.

In 1989 the Lord caused the landlady of an eye hospital situated directly opposite our Church to sell it to us. This property of 29,026 sq ft is prime land that has marriage value according to the description of property dealers. With the acquisition of Beulah House which is the new name for the former eye-hospital, all our needs for extra accommodation are met. Here is found a wonderful relief to the many fellowships of the Mother Church where each unit is given a room to themselves. Here is ample space for Church functions, for Sunday school classes, choir, fellowship meetings and accommodation for FEBC married students, more guest rooms to provide hospitality to passing-through missionaries, Christian workers, members from churches in the mission fields, etc. A most cordial welcome is extended to His servants, "because that for His Name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles" (III John 7). "We therefore ought to receive such that we might be fellow Helpers to the truth" (III John 8). In order to make our guests feel at home, this is our reply to those who write in, "Even if there is no room, our Singapore houses are made of rubber, so we can stretch them." For our own admonition, here's the Chinese proverb, "He who never had a guest in his house can neither find a host abroad." Today Life Church is still growing, by virtue of the living space we have been accorded by God's Providential Hand.

Far Eastern Bible College which is the special ministry of Life Church, helps make the Church a spiritual Jerusalem. The doctrine of the B-P Church which is Reformed and Premillennial is taught by the College. The two evening classes on Monday and Thursday have been used to indoctrinate lay leaders of the Church and Sunday school teachers. Right doctrine sustains steady church growth like good food the body.

In regard to the usual services that the Church should render to her members, such as visitations, to homes and hospitals, officiating weddings and funerals and counselling, these will be further facilitated if the pastor resides in the Church compound. This is our joy and experience. Indeed, we go one step farther than Calvin, who says the parsonage should be located near the Church. We say, rather, in the Church! By staying "centrally" with the people, the pastor and his wife are always at the members' service, and we believe in 24 hours in the day and seven days in the week. This certainly expedites Church growth.

But the greatest service we can offer the Church is the Sunday Service. Let every pastor prepare to concert pitch the conducting of the Lord's Day Worship. This sentiment is more forcefully expressed in an ordination sermon preached in 1879 by James Stalker in Scotland, who later became professor of Church History at Aberdeen. Dr Stalker, under the caption of "The Minister's Sacred Trust," said:

They (the congregation) say ... Look, brother, we are busy with our daily toils and confusion and darkness; but we eagerly long for peace and light to cheer and illuminate our life; and we have heard there is a land where these are to be found - a land of repose and joy, full of thoughts that breathe and words that burn: but we cannot go thither ourselves; we are too embroiled in daily cares: come, we will elect you, and set you free from our toils,

and you shall go thither for us, and week by week trade with that land and bring us its treasures and spoils.

Oh, woe to him who accepts this election, and yet, failing through idleness to carry on the noble merchandise, and appears week by week empty-handed or with merely counterfeit treasure in his hands! Woe to him, too, if going to that land, he forgets those who sent him and spends his time there in selfish enjoyment of the delights of knowledge! Woe to him if he does not, week by week, return laden, and ever more richly laden, and saying, Yes, brothers, I have been to that land; and it is a land of light and peace and nobleness: but I have never forgotten you and your needs...look, I have brought back this, and this, and this: take them to gladden and purify your life!

Not only the sermon, which must be ever fresh and enlightening, not like some reheated overnight fried rice, but also the choice of hymns. Martin Luther says, "Music is next to theology." The introduction of some new hymn or chorus every now and then and the singing of Psalms with a lively tune will bring reviving of spirit. The pastor is both theologian and musician. "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old" (Matthew 13:52).

In the matter of Church music there are two extreme positions. On one hand we have the diehard Reformed school that sing only Psalms with their mouth (or throat) and on the other hand there are the charismatics that use drums and cymbals and hit them to the thud of rock music. We believe in supportive piano and organ playing with a Sankey touch. The story is told that when Moody and Sankey his song leader visited Scotland, they deeply deplored the pompous pipe organ that sounded like the firing of the battleship's 16-inch guns. Sankey brought with

him a small pump organ. As the sacred strains, soft and tender accompanied the preacher's appeal, tear-gates were opened and souls yielded to the Saviour's touch. How the pianist and organist play can make or break at a worship service. Remember Sankey!

We believe in choirs spiritually trained, singing the old classicals, but we are also for modern composition insofar as they will stand the test of time, and become standard in days to come. We believe the training of children's choirs (the joy of parents) can add to Church growth, as it is said, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength..." (Psalm 8:2). When these singing children grow up they form themselves into the "Young Pilgrims" choir. The regular choir of course is the church choir where there is no age limit. Do you know who is the progenitor of church choirs? King David, the inventor of Hebrew poetry, who is also called, "the sweet Psalmist of Israel" (II Samuel 23:1; I Chronicles 25).

The climax of the first part of worship which consists of praise and invocation and reading of a Psalm, topped up with choir singing, is the offering (I Corinthians 16:2). Churches that station a box at the doorway for this purpose belittle His command. Offering is part of and climax to the first phase of worship. (Part II is the Message.) When we approach God, Moses says, "None shall appear before Me empty" (Exodus 23:15). One Psalmist says, "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name: bring an offering, and come into his courts" (Psalm 96:8). Another echoes, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people" (Psalm 116:12-14). In the New Testament we have the Apostle Paul's injunction, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God

hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Corinthians 16:1,2).

How much should I bring to the Lord? One tenth is the Biblical standard both in the Old and New Testaments (Malachi 3:10; Luke 11:42). But it must be a free-will offering. Be thankful, and give as the Lord has prospered you during the week. "For God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (As it is written, He had dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever (II Corinthians 9:7-9).

At the inner entrance to Life Church over the main door is written "The House of Prayer." This description of the Church auditorium is taken from Isaiah 56:7 "Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people." Every Church, if it is to be a power house, must have regular prayer. It is the custom of our Singapore churches to have a mid-week prayer meeting, as is the custom in America. The Koreans hold early morning prayer meetings five or six days of the week, and this is practised by our friends worshipping at Life Church.

It is said that when a Sunday Service is fully attended, it shows the pastor's popularity, but when a mid-week prayer meeting is well attended, it shows the popularity of the Lord. These are halcyon days in Singapore, when people indulge in eating and drinking, and the TV takes a hold on housewives and children. Thus prayer meetings become lukewarm like what a pastor's son said to me, whose name was Luke. He said "I am lukewarm."

Members of Session, being leaders of the Church are looked up to, to lead the flock by regular attendance. Some who cannot come might have legitimate excuse. It is between them and the Lord. Nevertheless, prayer meeting is like glowing charcoal, the more the merrier. Scatter them, the fire dies out. At the prayer meeting, it had been good if members sat closer to the pastor, leading. Seated in the back pews, they are like scattered embers.

It is our custom at Life Church to have the one-and-a-half hour session divided into three parts. The first half hour is given to singing a hymn or two with serial Bible exposition. The next half hour is uplifted with testimonies of God's goodness and to His praise. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name" (Hebrews 13:15). The last half hour of prayer is led by the pastor, elders, deacons. Prayer requests written on cards are presented usually at the Sunday worship to the pastor, but the persons involved are urged to attend in person. Oftentimes, requests are made, but when the requests are answered, what happen to the testimonies? Nevertheless giving testimony at Life Church Tuesday Night Prayer Meeting has brought encouragement to members and glory to God. After the Prayer Meeting, a greater testimony may be offered by some grateful one in an envelope, which ranges from \$100 to \$1,000, through the pastor's hand to the Lord's Treasury. This is reflected in the Church Weekly in the column "From the Offering Bags." You cannot have Church growth without prayer growth. Church growth through the Tuesday Night Prayer Meeting is further inculcated by fellowship over a cup of tea or coffee before members wend their way home.

The pastor is ever ready to meet with members in trouble. This surely contributes to Church growth. Every now and then members will come to the parsonage to seek advice. More often counselling is given over the telephone in this "instant" age. This

can come late at night, but that is our job, like a nurse on duty. A church that grows must be constantly nurtured.

The pastor is always enthusiastically involved with the officiating of weddings, rejoicing with them that do rejoice. He is also sympathetically bound with the bereaved and weeps with them that weep (Romans 12:15). To be negligent or foot-dragging in the conducting of vigil service and funeral is disastrous to the minister's career. It can result in the losing of a member and his family to another church. This is church growth on the minus column.

A student of mine who became an assistant pastor got into his head from western training that he deserved a day off in the week. So, nothing could take him away from his particular day of Sabbath. When the grandma of a member of his church died, he could not be contacted because he had so determined. I was invited to conduct the vigil service. You can conclude what the results were.

In regard to weddings, there is no church so favourably situated as Life Church. Known as "the Church in a garden of fragrant pine and palm" she is so designed as to provide a porch linked to the Kindergarten Block which serves as a semi-open reception hall. Rain or shine, it can cater to a crowd of 300, buffet style.

The old custom of holding a sumptuous Chinese dinner in some hotel or restaurant, banqueting late into the night, is both time consuming and draining on the pocket. Gathering the guests together immediately after the Holy Ceremony in free buffet style is in happy contradistinction, economical and time saving. Indeed, it saves many a young couple from going into debt just to keep up with the Tans, Lims and Chuas.

But not all churches have the idyllic setting for a wedding *makan* as Life Church with her palm trees spreading a royal

umbrage. No wonder there is held on an average one wedding at Gilstead Road every other week. For Life Church caters also to a goodly number of other BP and fundamental, Bible-believing churches. This surely promotes church growth!

Church growth is promoted significantly through the fellowships, the more the merrier. Life Church can number easily a dozen fellowships, according to age and sex, and to certain functions, like the E(vangelistic)-Band and Missionary Fellowship. The leader of each fellowship is like an assistant pastor. He or she is most conversant of the needs of members. By caring for their needs they will be built up into the Church. The pastor is most grateful to these young leaders.

But the greatest contribution to the welfare of the church is the visitation programme of our Men's Fellowship. Their regular calling on absentee members is a labour of love.

Jerusalem, whether the tribes go up! This is the centre of all church life, through worship, prayer, fellowship and every other function, devotional or social, happy or sad. It is a hive of sacred activity which produces spiritual honey for the Lord, and honey is one of the seven holy fruits produced in the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 8:8).

For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within they walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good. (Psalm 122:5-9). Amen.

## CHAPTER VII

### JERUSALEM TRADING CO., UNLIMITED

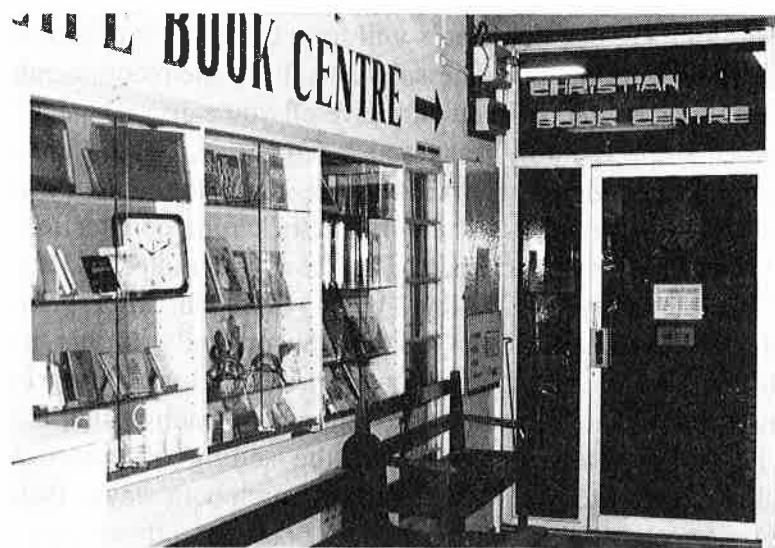
The Church is variously described - as a mustard seed, the least of all seeds, growing into a tree in the vegetable garden, that gives shelter to the birds, as a net cast into the sea which gathers all kinds of fish, both good and bad (Matthew 13).

Ever since I started out as pastor of Life B-P Church, I have always considered this aspect of the church from two other parables. They are the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-20) and the parable of the pounds (Luke 19:11-26). From these two parables we see the church as a Trading Company. Notice that when the Lord gave his servants the money, He commanded them to *gain* more - by *trading* (Luke 19:15; Matthew 25:16). While the word *trade* is emphasised in both Matthew and Luke, the happy corollary *gain* is thrice emphasised. The church should be run like a business enterprise. In this regard the Roman Catholic Church is one of the most efficiently managed public bodies in the world! The church should be profitable to her Master, both in the winning of souls (spiritual) and in the running of it as enterprise (economic). No business enterprise can survive if it keeps making a loss. So there was this wartime proverb that circulated in commercial Singapore, "Losing business no can do, head-cutting business (if profitable) yes can do."

Quite recently, to be exact, five years ago, Mrs Margaret Thatcher propounded her economic philosophy to her nation. Quoting John Wesley that God's will for a Christian is to live, and that he must work hard (II Thessalonians 3:10) she recommended, "Get all you can, gain all you can, give all you can." Under her helmsmanship, Britain prospered. Conversely the Marxian philosophy of economy embraced by the Big Communist Powers led to total bankruptcy. Why? Because it runs counter to our Lord's doctrine as enunciated in Matthew and Luke. "Get and gain" is the motive of trading, but a Christian, after gaining should give one tenth to God and accordingly to his poor neighbour. As for me, the first enterprise that should bring both spiritual and financial profit to the Church I came to think about was a Church Bookroom. Surely the selling of Bibles and Christian books, etc, would benefit the Church both ways. But, as we were worshipping on borrowed premises, there was no permanent place for development, not to talk of leasing some space for a bookroom. So I became a self-appointed colporteur. I would take one or two dozen Bibles from the Bible Society at a discount, and sell them to members. This brought in some extra cash to the Church and much blessing to members now encouraged to read God's Word. This selling of Bibles that began very early gradually grew into what is now known as the Christian Life Book Centre. The story of this first enterprise of Life Church, with its ups and downs, is published in the FEBC 30th Anniversary Magazine, 1962-1992 as follows:

The idea of a Christian book ministry for Life Church is almost as old as the founding of the Church itself! From the very beginning the Pastor was a self-appointed colporteur. He tried to promote God's Word by taking stocks from the Bible Society and selling them wherever he could.

With the building of Life BP Church at Gilstead Road, the book ministry idea took more concrete shape.



That corner-room now used by Christian Life Media Ministries was our bookroom. Starting out with little capital, we continued to sell Bibles and slowly added Christian books. The little profit realised provided a work scholarship for one FEBC student who was its sole colporteur and manageress. When up-country Gospel trips were made, we brought along Bibles and books which always enjoyed good patronage. This shows the importance of outdoor salesmen.

In January 1976, another FEBCer, found a job with Life Book Centre, now an official project of the Church. This business was managed by a Church Committee, leaving the sole employee to do the day-to-day business. The business, without private initiative and wholehearted devotion, was bound to fail. It ground to a halt in August 1979.

In September 1979, the business was given over to new management, a private enterprise headed by another FEBCer, Paul Wong. With much drive and vision, the old bookshop was given a completely new dressing. An adjoining classroom of the College was annexed to the new bookroom, now called Christian Life Book Centre.

It is 14 years since our Christian Book Ministry was committed to private enterprise. But that does not mean that it is not our Book Ministry. As long as Bibles and sound Christian Books and associated goods such as Christian gifts (like the JESUS SAVES clock and TEN COMMANDMENTS) continue to be sold, this CLBC is as much our continuing witness as their enterprise. The Church benefits CLBC and CLBC benefits the Church in a symbiotic relationship. How many times when you needed a Bible, a music book, a Christian gift, a book on theology, have you not walked in, without trouble, to get that thing you wanted? The approved one-hour opening of the Book Centre after Sunday service has met many an urgent need.

Inasmuch as FEBC and Life Church have coexisted side by side since 1962, CLBC is also the College's Book Centre. Besides FEBC students and Life Church members, the Book Centre is patronized by many pastors, full-time workers and keen readers from other Churches.

Since 1983, Christian Life has ventured into publishing and reprinting selected titles such as John Sung my Teacher, Willmingtons Guide to the Bible, etc. It provides a wide range of services such as book-binding, duplicating tapes, laminating, photocopying, and even selling postage stamps! Moreover there is ample free parking for customers. CLBC is indeed a handmaid to Life Church and Far Eastern Bible College in the propagation of the Gospel.

That our Bookroom is an integral part of church growth insofar as Bible-Presbyterians are concerned is acknowledged by Keith Hinton. He says in *Growing Churches Singapore Style*, p.128:

It also has a Bible College, a home for the elderly, a bookshop and an extensive missionary outreach.

The last part of the story of CLBC discloses how she has expanded to publishing books. This has particularly facilitated her founder. Through the ready services of CLBC, Far Eastern Bible College, through the principal's pen, especially, has published 20 books. These have found a good patronage locally and are sent to many parts of the world as a ministry of Life Church. Many readers have been blessed as evidenced by numerous feedbacks. A latest one from Sydney appreciating *Prophesope on Israel*, reads,

This is to thank you for your superb and fantastic book Deacon Lim sent me from Bethel, Prophesope on Israel. It has cleared everything in the Bible for me - all so full of interest. And thank you too for the splendid and readable print. Again thank you.

From a Jewish reader in Israel came these remarks:

Many thanks for the most interesting two books you have sent me. The Prophescope on Israel I have read twice, so did my friends. Many people mentioned in the book we know personally... Your comments on the Holocaust under Hitler and later the regathering of the Jews in Israel parallel to Isaiah's prophecy is superb.

If the books we have mailed out bear such sweet fruit, they will be an unseen agent in the promotion of church growth in other parts of the globe. Like leaven, in one of Jesus' parables (Matthew 13:33).

**"The pen is mightier than the sword."** To use it more effectively for the Lord, we have concentrated on publishing a weekly church paper from very early days. One foolscap on both sides of news, sermonette, editorial, announcements every week has been used of God to promote church growth more than all other writings. The Weekly is purposely limited to that one sheet, so that things of peripheral interest will not find a place there. Only those that concern the church and her members and the outreach of God's Kingdom, "all the news that's fit to print" will get published.

The paper is the silent mouthpiece of the pastor in the appeal for funds for church or mission projects. Oftentimes the pastor is accused of talking money, money, money from the pulpit. By making it known discreetly on silent paper, he is spared the ordeal of facing the members' vocal brickbats.

To supplement the Church Weekly, we distribute the RPG (Read, Pray & Grow), Daily Bible readings with Applied Commentary and the Banner, a polemical quarterly, both edited by Dr S H Tow of Calvary B-P Church. The Christian Life Media Ministries are agents for *Our Daily Bread* from USA which has a circulation of 60,000.

The power of the pen is seen most graphically when Life Church had to gather \$7.2 million in six-and-a-half months to acquire the former Eye-Clinic (Hospital) at 10 Gilstead Road, now known as Beulah House. The Church Weekly published during the said period, reprinted under the title, *Chronicles of Conquest*, is a testimony to God's power upon Life Church today. It is a testimony to God's transporting Life Church across her Jordan. This miracle is reflected on the cover of the book, Beulah House lashed by a yellow flood.

In the matter of building or extending God's House, we have never resorted to human wisdom of fund raising. Gathering funds for God's House by holding concerts, funfairs, garage sales, food fairs, baking cakes and pickling *a-char* is like catching fish by hook and line. Calling the faithful to bring in their tithes, lovingly and worshipfully according to God's command, is like drawing in the dragnet. Like Peter and his colleagues pulling in the two shiploads - at His Word. But the pastor must first set the example of giving. During Life Church's 43 years we have been entrusted to build not only the big church complex at Gilstead Road, New Life at Woodlands, Beulah House across Gilstead Road, but also to succour numerous projects overseas. In none of these endeavours have we relied on the arm of flesh, so God has seen us through most marvellously. As it is prescribed by Hudson Taylor, "God's work done in God's way will not lack God's support." Our way of putting it is, "Self help, with God's help, is the best help."

When we were involved with such a gargantuan project as the acquisition of the former Eye-Clinic across Gilstead Road, we were tempted to take a bank loan of \$2 million at first, and later on to reduce it to \$1 million. Believing with all our heart Lifers could take it without relying on any bank loan, we opened a new channel of self-help for members. It is to loan to the church interest free. This is in accordance with what I have been

biblically brought up under my pastor Grandpa: "Never borrow, never pay interest." St Paul says, "Owe no man anything" (Romans 13:8). By appealing for interest free loans, we gathered \$3.1 million. This sum included half from outside friends and sympathetic churches. God's power through free-will offerings and interest free loans was a means of grace to help us cross our financial Jordan.

The irresistible power of God was illustrated by an anecdote we published in Life B-P Weekly November 5, 1989 as follows:

Years ago, during the building of a bridge across a portion of New York harbour, the engineers were seeking a base for one of its buttresses. They struck upon an old scow (flat-bottomed boat) full of bricks and stone that had sunk in the mud until practically buried. Divers were sent down to place great chains under the scow so that it could be raised, but every effort failed.

A young engineer assured them it could be done. He brought two barges and attached huge chains around the scow to beams on the barges. The chains were tightly fastened at low tide. As the tide swept up the harbour, raising the barges, the buried scow shook, shivered and let go. It was raised by the lift of the Atlantic Ocean! "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:16).

What was the victory gained when Life Church's financial River Jordan was crossed? The victory of freedom from paying that irksome monthly interest plus borrowed capital - usually up to 15 years. All the money saved from paying bank interest we freely channelled to missions. Meanwhile, as the Lord's people continued to bring in their tithes, that \$3.1 million loan is now reduced to \$0.6 million as this book goes to press.

In our consistent day to day trading for the Lord to bring in both spiritual and economic dividends, we had a kindergarten

launched in 1969 as soon as the new three-storey extension block was built. The purpose of running a kindergarten is also two fold: To teach tiny tots, before going to school, the Word of God and the way of salvation. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). This is also a social and educational service that is appreciated by the government and the community.

Secondly, it is to make use of God-given premises (since we are favoured with one-and-a-quarter acres of land) to promote an economy profitable to both church and members who join the teaching staff. Moreover, the kindergarten rooms are an asset to the church, being available on Sunday - for Sunday School, nursery, etc. We consider the establishing of a kindergarten equivalent to the founding of a church. We deem it to be one unit of church growth.

The kindergarten, we have discovered, is also a means of bringing parents to the Lord. One mother who sends her child to Far Eastern Kindergarten everyday, after hearing the Gospel choruses and Bible stories told by FEBC students, disclosed to me personally how she had come to believe in the Saviour. "And a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6). The kindergarten is an incubator of church growth!

There is one form of trading for God which brings in 100 per cent profit both spiritual and economic. It is the ministry of hospitality as hinted earlier in this book. Every missionary, Christian worker and member of our churches abroad are welcome to stay in the FEBC Hotels and special guest rooms. "Our houses are made of rubber, so in case there is no room, we can stretch them."

With the acquisition of Beulah House we have not only been able to assign a room to each one of our fellowships but also increase the number of rooms for guests. (More are coming in and out all the time.) The little service we give to Christians from

other parts of the world however, can save them hundreds in hotel bills. This saving on their pocket book gives us joy unspeakable, “for the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgiving unto God” (II Corinthians 9:12). According to that Chinese proverb, “We having many guests in an house have also found many hosts abroad.” And these are found all over the ASEAN countries, in Australia, New Zealand, England, and even far away America. Glory and praise be to God! (The money our guests have saved are banked up in heaven to Life Church’s account.) Sometimes grateful guests leave behind an envelope. This is turned into the Church Treasury.

Yes, we must trade with every talent that our Lord has put into our hands. According to this principle, we have made available the church auditorium and FEBC Hall in the L-Annexe behind the church for the use of daughter congregations and fraternal churches of the same faith on the Lord’s Day.

Every Sunday, the church auditorium and FEBC Hall are used also by Life Chinese Service, Sharon B-P Church, Life Indonesian Service, Korean Church in Singapore twice, both noon and night. There is also a Thai Service held at Beulah House and a Filipina Fellowship at one of the kindergarten classrooms. Before this there was also a Tamil Service, which today has removed to Rehoboth, a newly acquired church house of the Tamil group. No other B-P church in Singapore is so intensively “traded” on the Lord’s Day. With ten services plus their Sunday schools and juniors worshipping at both sides of Gilstead Road, our church complex is a hive of activity for at least 2,000 souls every Lord’s Day.

Now, the least of the ten services held at Life Church every Lord’s Day is the Filipina Fellowship. With the devotion and zeal of Tai Ji Choong, an FEBC Certificate holder, Filipinas with a

Roman Catholic background are saved, one by one. Here is a testimony by Maria Liezl Felisario:

First of all I am a Filipina working here in Singapore. I came last 28th of August 1990. I was so happy because my employers are Christians. Every Sunday we go to church (LBPC). But because I'm just a domestic servant I have to watch my employee's children who go to Beulah House. But I want you to know that I am a Catholic, so I don't really feel like attending.

Then I heard about the Filipina Fellowship and one of my friends asked me to join, but at first I was not interested, so I did not join. But last year my cousin came to work here also. So I asked her opinion about my being a Catholic and at the same time attending the Christians' Filipina Fellowship. She said, "Why not? There's nothing wrong with it." So I did. I started last December '92 and Bro Ji Choong is the one who teaches us the Bible. He also prayed for us if we had problems at home, work, or if we were not feeling well.

I'm proud to say that I like being a Christian and I love to be baptised again so that I will become a Christian. But before this I have to attend the Catechism Class under Rev Tow. And I have learnt so many things about our Lord. I'm so sorry because my English is poor, so I cannot express my feelings more, but I know that the Lord understands me. My greatest wish is to know more about Him, serve Him and love Him with all my heart. Thanks to Bro Ji Choong and especially the pastor who gave me the strength and confidence to have faith in Him. Thank you very much.

In regard to our Chinese Service, we have discovered that by holding both English and Chinese services at the same time, this has greatly facilitated attendance by the whole family. While the English-speaking children worship in the big church auditorium in front, their Chinese-speaking parents concurrently

find their places at the back. This promotes church growth on either side! (The Chinese Service has an average attendance of 170 - 190).

Church growth must be promoted by whatever talent God has given us. Let us share with the reader one form of trading that has developed from expertise gained in the course of one's ministry. In 1969-70 we spent a six-month vacation in Bethlehem to study Modern Hebrew. We spent another 40 days vacation at the same place in June 1991, on top of half a dozen other visits to the Holy Land. With the knowledge of the people and the land thus gained the Lord has enabled us to lead four pilgrimages to the Promised Land. Each time there was a full capacity of 50 or near 50. By taking Lifers and FEBC students to the Bible Lands, we've developed a closer fellowship with some we had never known (for the church has 1,300 members). It affords FEBC students a vital subject of the Bible to learn for which when they have written a comprehensive report will receive two academic credits.

Being a pilgrimage, the members of the party are solemnised through nightly worship and testimony at Baraka Conference Centre, the Holy Land Mission of the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions. Moreover, pilgrims are urged to bring a gift to show our love to the Arab Christians converted under the Mission. The blessings are mutual as we further worship at the Baraka Bible-Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem. Whenever the people in Israel hear of our coming their hearts are uplifted and their hopes are stirred. "Come and visit us," they call. "Whenever you come you bring us revival."

Now, Arabs are known for their fierceness and terrorisms. What is an Arab Christian like? Is there any difference between a Singapore Christian and one in Bethlehem. Here is the testimony of an Arab Christian, who in fact came to FEBC years ago for

training. Read his testimony here and you will have the feel whether there is any difference between them and us.

My name is Issa Banurah. I was born at the Shepherds Field. This is the area where the angels visited the shepherds to announce the birth of Christ. I have lived in the Bethlehem area all my life.

As a boy I attended the Greek Orthodox Church until I became a young man of 22 years of age. In 1952 whilst I was attending a church meeting in Jordan, the Lord spoke to me and I accepted him as my Saviour. From that day on I've been a born again Christian.

I came back to Bethlehem from Jordan and started to attend the Baraka Bible-Presbyterian Church in 1952. I started to witness to my family, friends and people at work.

Whilst working as the maintenance manager of Baraka Hospital I had great opportunity to present the Gospel to Bedouin Muslim patients and the young Palestinians from the refugee camp nearby the hospital. During my service to the Lord I have seen many come to Him.

Since the early 1960s I had been pastoring the congregation at Baraka Bible-Presbyterian Church, preaching, teaching Sunday school and youth groups. I also lead Bible studies and prayer meetings.

I attended the FEBC in 1981. During this period I enjoyed warm fellowship with my brothers and sisters there, while studying God's Word. I was greatly encouraged through this time of study at the FEBC. The Lord blessed me and renewed my strength, so that I am able to overcome the difficulties which we face in this country today. I continue my services to the Lord today as a preaching elder at Baraka Bible-Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem. Now Rev George Awad is pastor.

One good deed leads to another. Our brother church, Calvary BPC following in our footsteps have also organised two Bible Land Study Tours to great profit. So they are going there again in May 1994. More profits in trading for the Lord! Life Church will follow up with a 5th Pilgrimage in March, 1994, God-willing.

Sometimes, there are wonderful resources placed within our reach, for us to develop more profitably for the Lord. But we are blind to these resources. Thus, it has been the pastor's challenge to members to be innovative. Any new bright idea that can bring profit to the Lord, spiritually or economically, I call it a genius.

Here is an example of a genius. While the church is cleaned up every week by a faithful and long service Indian woman, there is much on the church premises that can be further tidied and properly arranged, such as the binding of old hymn books, the repair of pews, the cleaning of the walls, etc. An Elder has taken up the repair of church furniture, particularly the pews, and a Deacon has seen to the rest of it all. These, I say, are two geniuses. They are profitable to the church and to the Lord's vineyard. They are agents of church growth.

A latest genius to church growth is the revived writing of Gospel tracts. Apart from the pastor, Charles Seet our missionary to the Philippines there is Dr Jeffrey Khoo, FEBC lecturer, who is adding new ones to our own products. Thanks to Christian Life Media Ministries, these new tracts are being printed under their auspices by the ten-thousands.

Talking about geniuses in writing Gospel tracts, here is one from Miss Thelma Alfsen, whose father I had known since the sixties, a former Christian and Missionary Alliance missionary to China. He shifted to Malaysia after Mao's takeover. Being a separatist we became mutual friends.

Miss Alfsen continued in her father's footsteps and served not only in Malaysia but also Indonesia, and is now in Macau. What is her genius? She got published a little booklet called "The Way to Heaven" written by her Chinese colleague Irene Yang. This booklet is now translated into many East European languages and printed by the hundreds of thousands to show the way of salvation to hungry souls of the former Communist world. A genius is that idea that works and multiplies and keeps growing and ever growing to the glory of God. Do you have a genius for the Lord? Here comes that famous couplet by William Carey, father of modern missions,

*Expect great things from God,*

*Attempt great things for God.*

We are on the road to church growth for 43 years and each year brings us some excitement as we see more growth of His work, the sproutings of new churches along the way. Let each one develop the talent God has given him, not the least, the pastor, as he goes on this Road, that he should not be travel-worn, but rather "run the race with patience that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1,2). Amen.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **THE POWER THAT IS BEGOTTEN**

At the outset of this treatise we noted that when the Great Commission is quoted, the speaker oftentimes will begin in this truncated form, "Go ye therefore." But the preamble "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" is unwittingly left out. Without Divine power, no wonder church growth is so slow ...

We who experienced that Power from the Singapore Pentecost, have not forgotten. Yea, we were begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (I Peter 1:4).

Church growth bespeaks of life, abundant life in the church that begets more life. As observed by Dr S H Tow in Chapter V, "Church growth of the Biblical pattern does not come by attending a course in 'missiology' in some high-powered 'School of Missions.' Church growth is simply the work of the Holy Spirit through obedient men and women heeding our Lord's command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. It is the founding of Bible-believing God-honouring churches, standing on the Word of God against the floodtide of the end time apostasy now sweeping around the world."

Observes Dr Tow further, "No church can grow and prosper without a succession of good and strong leaders for future generations. The apostle Paul, church planter and wise master

builder, was ever mindful of this basic need. His instructions to Timothy are vital for church growth:

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. (II Timothy 2:1-3)

The role of the Far Eastern Bible College in equipping workers for God's vineyard is of inestimable value. Without FEBC the B-P Churches would fade away in a generation."

To this observation by my brother, there is one who will shout Amen. He is none other than Rev (Dr) Paul Contento, 86, still active preaching to Chinese and Vietnamese Churches in Philadelphia, Baltimore and New York. It is he who years ago made this statement in a Church magazine, "Without the Bible College the Church would die." When FEBC was founded in 1962 he sent us a gift to express his support. He was the honoured missionary to lay the foundation stone.

In this connection it is of paramount importance in the establishing of any school of theological learning that it be totally different from the secular. Stressing so-called academic excellence without the spiritual training of the whole man, one's life and character, is the surest way to kill church growth. Paul not only taught Timothy the Scriptures, He was his spiritual father (II Timothy 1:2) and Timothy his dearly beloved son (II Timothy 1:2). The principal and faculty of a Bible College must first of all be spiritual men, full of the Holy Spirit, through whom spiritual sons and daughters are begotten of their pupils. The principal and faculty of a Bible College must be men of exemplary character, who through their daily life and conduct are constantly moulding the lives of their students. This emphasis in theological training I had imbibed from my teacher in Nanking, Dr Chia Yu Ming, who

named his school “Spiritual Training Theological Seminary”. The transmission of mere head knowledge without the imparting of life and spiritual values in our students is fatal. They will become theological robots, with software but without a soft heart.

Perhaps we can learn a lesson from Confucius on spiritual values. One of Confucius' disciples said, “If a man withdraws his mind from lust and applies it as sincerely to the love of the virtuous, if in serving his parents he can exert his utmost strength, if in serving his prince he can devote his life, if in his intercourse with his friends his words are sincere, though men say that he has not learned, I will certainly say that he has.” By analogy let me say, “If a student is industrious and not lazy, and loves his God with all his heart and respects his teachers and can live peacefully with his roommates and performs his duties meticulously, though men say he has not earned a degree and is not learned, I will certainly say that he is.” The secret of continuing church growth is the Bible College that trains men and women of character. Inasmuch as Far Eastern Bible College has graduated 201 students during the last 30 years and the majority of these are planting churches around the world, it is my prayer at the conclusion of this treatise that this Faculty will be able to commit the Word to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Be able to beget more spiritual sons like Paul's dearly beloved son in the faith. This succession cannot be effected but by the transmission of a life to another, “the power that is begotten.”

The story of 43 years on the road to church growth of the B-P Movement is also the story of Far Eastern Bible College.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FAR EASTERN BIBLE COLLEGE

Like the sowing of the grain of mustard seed (Matt. 13:31,32), Far Eastern Bible College had sprung from an idea first implanted in the mind of its principal as early as 1954. This idea arose partly from a pressing need to train a new generation of evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11) for the Church of Jesus Christ in the Far East, and partly from a theological confrontation with certain institutions in Singapore that had apostatised from the Faith. As it developed into a burden, the principal shared it with his colleague and comrade, the Rev Quek Kiok Chiang, who gave him every support and encouragement.

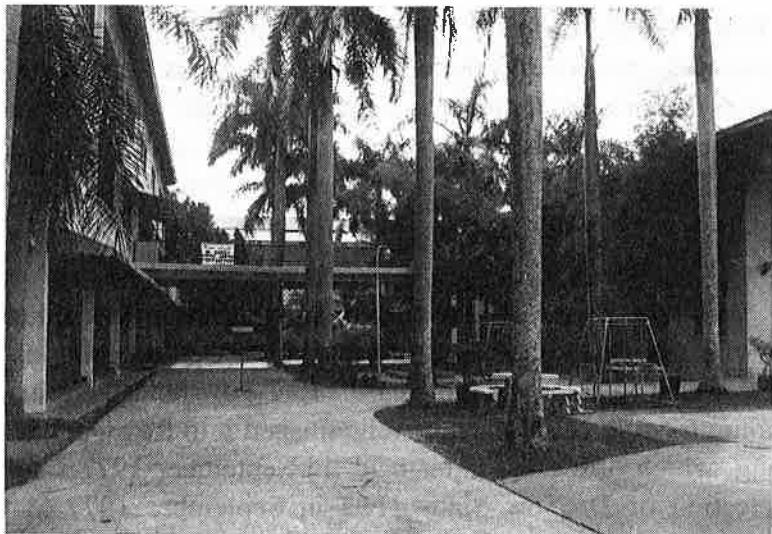
Thus when Rev Timothy Tow was delegated in 1958 by the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore and Malaysia to the Congress of the International Council of Christian Churches in Brazil, this was deemed a golden opportunity to take further studies at Faith Seminary, USA in order to equip himself better for the teaching ministry.

The burden of founding a theological school increased steadily after the principal's return to Singapore. This was reflected in a leading article in the Malaysia Christian, captioned, "The Trend is Toward the Trained." In the meantime, interest in the proposed Bible College grew so strong that an evening school was launched in July 1961. This evening school, offering courses in Old Testament History and Christian Doctrine, was carried on at the old Life Church, Prinsep Street until the College formally opened on Sept. 17 1962 at Gilstead Road.

The decision to establish a Far Eastern Bible College was made by leaders of the Bible-Presbyterian Church on Sept. 19, 1960. This decision was precipitated by the visit of Dr Philip Clark, General Secretary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, USA. The General Secretary's



*This early photo shows the FEBC extension in full exposure.*



*"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree" (Psalm 92:12). Pray for FEBC that she may stand firm for the FAITH.*

promise to send qualified teachers to help in this ambitious national undertaking was crucial to the founding of the College.

The location of the Bible College was providentially included in a new building project of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. The spacious, sylvan site of the new Church about to build at Gilstead Road was chosen as the College campus. This choice was made possible by Life Church's willingness to relinquish her original plan for a kindergarten in favour of a Bible College annexe. (Incidentally, such a Church-and-College complex is in the good tradition of no less a stalwart than Pastor C.H.Spurgeon.) In view of the College's central position in this metropolis of Southeast Asia, being easily accessible to prospective students from all parts of the Far East, the name Far Eastern was chosen.

The College was purposely constituted an autonomous institution, independent of ecclesiastical control. A Board of Directors was to be elected from men of faith and wisdom within the Bible-Presbyterian Church and from our cooperating missionaries. An interim three-man committee was appointed to draft a constitution and prospectus for the College, and to serve as liaison between the Bible-Presbyterian Church and the Mission Board. The three men were Rev Timothy Tow, B.D., S.T.M., Rev Quek Kiok Chiang and Dr Tow Siang Hwa, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.O.G.

When the Board of Directors was formed, the Rev Timothy Tow was given the onerous task to head the College, both as its principal and president of the Board. Rev Tow held the reins of presiding for five years when he relinquished it to Rev Quek Kiok Chiang, which office the latter held till September 1977. With the election of Dr Tow Siang Hwa in September 1977 to the presidency of the Board of Directors, the College increased substantially in all its endeavours. Dr Tow Siang Hwa served with distinction till 1989. Thereafter the reins of the College

were handed to Dr Tow Siang Yeow.

Missionaries who have played a vital role in the planting and nurture of the FEBC vine from 1964 to 1980 are Rev and Mrs John E. Grauley, Dr Synesio Lyra (loaned from Shelton College), Rev and Mrs Burton Toms, and Rev and Mrs Edward Paauwe.

From its inception the College has provided a standard Four-year training leading to the Bachelor of Theology. A Three-year course granting a Diploma in Theology and a One-and-a-half-year course awarding a Certificate in Religious Knowledge were simultaneously given. Since 1991 the College had added courses leading to the Master of Divinity and Master of Religious Education.

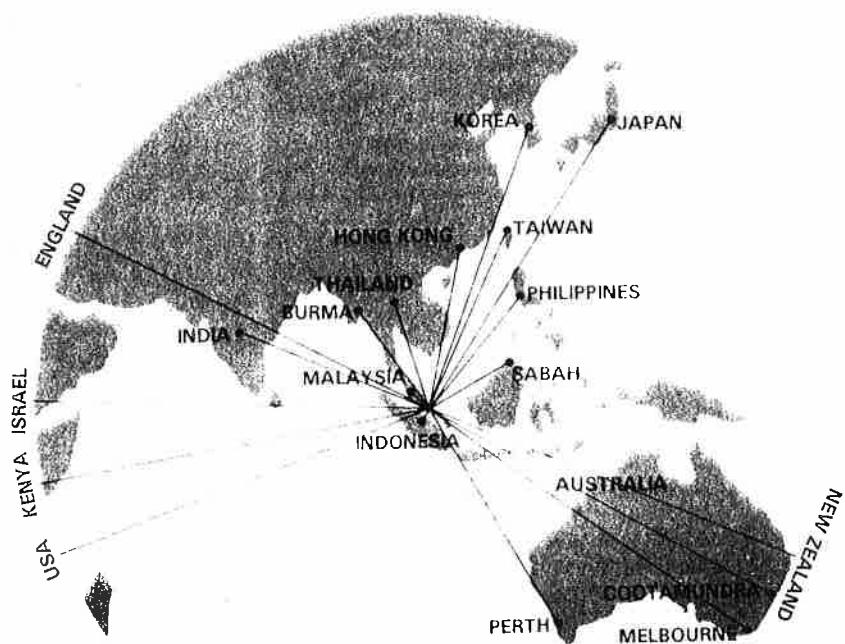
Beginning with three students from 1962, the College has steadily grown to sixty-seventy in the student body. 201 young men and women have graduated during the last 30 years. These are now serving in the harvest fields of the Far East - in Singapore, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, India, Australia, New Zealand, England, USA and Africa. Over 30 have gone for higher studies in USA, Canada, England and Scotland. A good number have returned to teach at the alma mater and in other theological schools in the Far East.

In conjunction with Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, the College has maintained a ministry of hospitality all these years to passing through missionaries, pastors and church workers.

An adjunct to Far Eastern Bible College is Life Book Centre, which opened in January 1976. The Book Centre, apart from catering to the Church and Christian public, is also purchasing agent for the College Library and an immediate supply house of theological books to students.

Far Eastern Bible College being closely linked to Life Bible-Presbyterian Church is mutually blessed when the Church acquired the former Eye Clinic property at 10 Gilstead Road,

which is now named Beulah House. With many rooms available for dorms for married students the problem of their accommodation is happily solved. With a campus much enhanced in space and every facility for study Far Eastern Bible College must redouble its efforts to train labourers for the harvest fields and the growth of the Church even unto the uttermost part of the earth till He comes. Amen.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Friend of the author since 1946 when he was student in Nanking, China, Rev Paul A Contento, veteran missionary of China Inland Mission (CIM) says:

*"I have known Rev (Dr) Timothy Tow for over forty years as a colleague in our Lord's ministry, as a friend and true soldier of the Cross! He likes to say that he is Timothy and I am Paul in that order! But the opposite is the truth.*

*He is a faithful servant and prodigious worker in His vineyard. I am sure that he has planted more than forty churches up until now. And the fact is that they are all flourishing. Malaysia is dotted with churches he established there. He has founded churches in Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Burma and a good number on Singapore itself. I think he has also contributed not a little to a church in the Holy Land.*

*More than that he was called to found the Far Eastern Bible College in Singapore from which a stream of pastors have graduated to shepherd these churches. As if this was not enough, he has produced over a dozen books which would have been a life-time achievement by men of lesser mettle! All his family are high achievers in various fields of knowledge, to the glory of God."*

Dr Peter Masters, pastor of Spurgeon's Tabernacle, London, says, "Dr Timothy Tow is the senior Pastor of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, Singapore and Principal of Far Eastern Bible College. Over the last 43 years Dr Tow has been greatly used of God in planting an entire new constituency of thriving churches and mission stations in Singapore, Malaysia and elsewhere in the Far East. His own very large church holds services every week in Mandarin, Thai, Indonesian and Korean languages, besides the principal English services. Dr Tow continues to engage in missionary itineraries throughout the Far East wherever evangelistic groups can be planted and supported..."

