

**Spring 2007**

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# In Search of a Chinese Christian Spirituality

**Andy Ching**

This year marks the 200th anniversary of Robert Morrison's Protestant Chinese mission. But how mature is the Chinese church? Rufus Anderson, a renowned missiologist and secretary of the U.S. Foreign Mission Board, defined a mature church as "Self-supporting, Self-governing and Self-propagating." If this is so, the present day Chinese church not only has achieved all three principles but also sends missionaries all over the world. But the question remains whether the Chinese church has her own identity and an indigenous message? In other words, does she have her own spiritual distinctive?

A Chinese seminary professor once told me that there is no such thing. He pointed out that Chinese Christian theology either follows Western thoughts or Chinese traditional religions, namely, Confucianism, Daoism, or Buddhism. A typical example is a study from the 1996 CCCOWE, titled "A Reflection on the Chinese Christian Spiritual Tradition."(CCCOWE) The resources quoted in that article, other than a mention of Watchman Nee and Tai Chi Quen, are all western spirituality.

From another angle, Catholic theologians Julia Ching and Hans Kung think that Chinese spirituality is unique in her "sage" philosophy

and folk religions. Chinese Christians should transform that religiosity to form an indigenous Christian spirituality. (Chao) Professor Benedict Kwok also presents his understanding of Chinese spirituality from the views of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. (Kwok)

Missiologist and Professor Enoch Wan, while structuring a Sino-Theology, considers Chinese spirituality as “the most difficult sub-topic” because “the most deficient area in Chinese traditional philosophy is cosmology which covers origin, consummation, and spiritual realm.” (Wan) His discussion on Sino-Spirituality also starts from Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. He then applies the family system to connect to western church growth theory and form an extended spiritual family system.

Pastor Chore-Fai Siu studies Chinese spirituality from a fresh angle: Pneumatology. He finds that no matter what theological positions they came from, many Chinese Christian leaders such as Chao Tzu-ch'en, Wu Lei-ch'uan, Wang Ming-tao, did have similar views of spiritual life. He summarizes them in three models: the moralists, the mystics, and the miraculous. Siu traces the roots of these models to the thoughts that influence all those Chinese Christian leaders, none other than Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism. (Siu) His research is eye-opening and very valu-

able to the study of Chinese Christian spirituality.

Professor Wing-Hung Lam in his book, *Chinese Theology in Construction* applies Neibuhr's views from *Christ and Culture* to illustrate patterns of indigenization of Christian faith, such as “Presence of Classical Precedents”, “Harmonization of Cultures”, “To Fulfill, Not to Destroy”, “Cultural Dual-ism”, “Christianity Judges Culture.” (Lam) This study shows a way to classify Chinese Christian spirituality into certain patterns with regard to cultures.

Dr. Tin-Ying Chao's four periods of Chinese Christian spirituality gives a historical view on the issue. It begins with a western missionary spirituality, followed by Chinese Christian self-examination period (1920-30), self-propagation (1930-40), and the period around 1997. (Chao) Although this study is sketchy, it does alert us on the bi-centennial of Chinese Protestantism to the Chinese Christian need to formulate an answer to her own identity. In fact Professor Ka-Lun Leung from Alliance Bible Seminary has done remarkable research in this area. His article also summarizes three possible research approaches: traditional philosophies and religions, spiritual typology, and historical study. (Leung) Hopefully scholars will continue to discuss and research the topic of Chinese Christian spirituality.

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# Silence

Jan Dale

Silence. It seems to me there is so little of it in our society today.

It was a very cold day in January. The moving truck drove on the frozen, icy ground to the front door of our new home. Furniture and many packed boxes were unloaded, mainly on the first floor of the 1820 farm house. Expert workmen were renovating the kitchen, so getting settled was limited.

I was beginning a sabbatical from teaching at the seminary and gradually realized how very tired I was physically, psychologically, emotionally. Craving solitude, each afternoon I retreated to the small bedroom upstairs, away from the noises of power tools and the conversations of men working, to sit alone. For many days and weeks the silence ministered to me as I increasingly focused on the Lord. It made me uncomfortable at first because the more still I became, the more I heard my own inner noise. The clanging sounds within me were the issues I needed to

honestly face. Issues like my rushed schedule, my priorities, and the lack of balance in my life. Each of these important matters I needed to face and deal with one by one. Together they indicated my lack of self control which, as a fruit of the Spirit, is foundational (Galatians 5: 22-23).

As I sat alone, not only did I realize how tired I was, but more important was the fresh, stark realization of my own dark soul. As I compared myself to the Lord as revealed in His Word, I again saw clearly my sinfulness. Like the prophet Isaiah (6: 1-7) I saw myself as God knows me. I accepted His forgiveness, and as a result, I opened myself to Him to make some significant changes—to transform me inwardly and outwardly. Each day as silence filled the space around me, I responded, and it filled me. I now was able to watch and listen for God's footsteps. Of course, He was there all along. I just needed to be more fully aware of Him.

By themselves, silence and

solitude can be lonely, empty, even depressing, and I can easily turn away. I learned that with discipline, they become the context or platform to listen to my inner condition and to listen for the Lord's voice. "Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth," (Psalm 46:10). Then the silence is healing, fulfilling. "Though silence sometimes involves the absence of speech, it always involves the act of listening," (Foster 1988, 98).

When He was on earth, Jesus sought solitude and silence. Remember, at the beginning of His ministry, he spent 40 days in the desert alone (Matthew 4: 1-11). He taught His disciples to seek solitude as well: "The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, 'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.' So

they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place,” (Mark 6: 30-32). My Master and His followers benefited from solitude.

Many weeks later as I moved back into the stream of a busy daily life, I wondered how to maintain silence and solitude, to continue to “let all my senses be still,” (1988, 103). “Control rather than no noise is the key to silence,” Foster teaches (1988, 98), and he refers us to Thomas a Kempis: “It is easier to be silent altogether than to speak with moderation” (1988, 99). Actually, when I speak to others when I am filled with myself, I experience the opposite of silence. I agreed with Foster: I was used to using words to manage others and my world (1988, 100-101). When I chose not to explain myself and defend myself and instead chose silence and solitude, I felt a measure of helplessness and a need to trust the Lord to be in control, to demonstrate His care for me and those people and situations that I care about.

Born in me was a heart-felt desire to know when to be silent. “There is a time for everything . . . a time to be silent and a time to speak,” (Eccl 3:1, 7). At times, even the Lord chose not to reply to others. When Jesus was nearing crucifixion, He chose not to defend himself to the high priest. “Some

stood up and gave this false testimony against him . . . . Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, ‘Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?’ But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, ‘Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?’ ‘I am,’ said Jesus,” (Mark 14: 57-62). Later, Jesus was silent before Pilate as well (Mark 15: 3-5). The Lord in His Word speaks about this to us: “Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few,” (Eccl. 5: 2). To reflect my Savior, I learned to repeat often an important prayer: “Lord, help me to know when to be silent and when to speak.”

Experiencing silence and solitude with the Lord in my busy world while serving in His kingdom has become one way the Lord is transforming me to be like Him.

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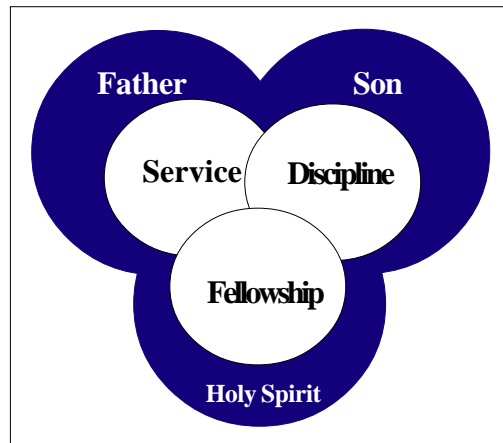
# Spiritual Formation of Counselors

Michael Gillern and Margaret Bloomer

Spiritual maturity is a journey on which counselors face many obstacles to their personal growth and effectiveness. On this journey it is important that the counselor rest on the foundation of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit while actively cultivating the spiritual disciplines, participating in fellowship and serving others. Knowing the obstacles to spiritual growth and setting aside time for introspection are also key components of this journey.

Developing spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fasting, meditation, study of God’s word and worship help to draw the counselor into a more intimate relationship with God. For more details on these disciplines, read Richard Foster’s book *Celebration of Discipline*. Spending time with God is essential to the spiritual formation of the counselor.

Fellowship is equally important. We were designed to be in relationship with each other and with God. Hebrews 10: 25 states “Let us not



give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” It is important to surround yourself with people who can challenge you to become a better person. You can approach this like you would approach forming a team. For example, do you want to improve your prayer life? Find someone whose prayer life you really admire and ask them to mentor you.

Have you picked your team? Who sharpens you in different areas like “iron sharpens iron”

(Proverbs 27:17)? There is such beauty in the refinement that comes from relationships ordained by God. Trusted friends can provide a unique perspective on our lives and can keep us accountable to following God with our whole hearts.

The third essential component in the spiritual formation of the counselor is service. When was the last time you served others without expecting anything in return? Serving others brings joy and helps us to enter into the heart of the father.

The journey of spiritual formation has three particularly dangerous potholes: cynicism and stagnation, living out of pretense, and facing suffering. There is always a danger of being lured into the mentality that you’ve studied and mastered all you need to about the Bible. This mentality can cause stagnation in one’s relationship with God and cynicism about daily life. Maintaining a teachable spirit helps one receive truth with humility and honesty. The Holy Spirit is active and desires to bring

you into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ each day. An openness to the Holy Spirit can bring new learning at all stages of life's journey.

The second potential barrier to spiritual growth is living out of pretense. As Brenning Manning stated in *A Rabbi's Heartbeat*, "Living out of the false self creates a compulsive desire to present a perfect image to the public so that everybody will admire us and nobody will know us." Living an authentic life and not comparing oneself to others is important. Counselors experience great pressure from society and from ourselves to have an answer for everything and to be perfect in all we do. Pastors face similar expectations. The reality is, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). It's important to recognize this truth and to portray our lives accordingly. We are all sinners, sustained daily by the grace, love and mercy of God. Our worth comes from God, not from our actions, bank accounts, earthly possessions or prestige. We must strive to be like Christ while maintaining the knowledge that we will never be perfect, and we are not expected to be.

The third challenge counselors face is becoming bogged down by all the suffering they encounter. It is important to have a theology of suffering to protect against this. Ro-

mans 8:18-31 is a good place to start developing this. Remembering that God's grace is sufficient for all the unpredictable things in life, getting enough rest, and exhibiting proper self care are critical contributions toward maintaining a balanced and Godly approach to suffering.

Part of exhibiting proper self-care is taking time for introspection. Writing a spiritual autobiography that involves praying that the Holy Spirit will reveal to you experiences in your life that were significant in your spiritual formation begins a journey in which old memories are given new meaning. Reasons for trust or mistrust in one's current situation can be revealed; patterns of spiritual giftings can emerge. It is important to know where you came from and where you are now before you can know where you are going. Think of being lost in a shopping mall and approaching a directory. If you can identify on the map where you need to go, but cannot find the "you are here" sticker to know where you are, you will not know which direction your destination is.

The Psalmist set a good example of introspection by asking the Lord to reveal potential blocks to spiritual growth in Psalm 139: 23-24, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.<sup>24</sup> See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." God may reveal to you

that you need to forgive someone you thought you had already forgiven. Forgiveness can be a process. We may throw a blanket of forgiveness over a person without considering each sin that the person committed against us. Then, in doing a spiritual autobiography, or in asking the Lord to search us, an old wound may need to be addressed. We serve a great God who gives us tender love, mercy, grace, and courage during this process.

On your own journey of spiritual maturity may you rest in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. May you develop spiritual disciplines, enjoy fellowship and serve others. May you be aware of obstacles to your growth and be intentional about overcoming them. May the grace of the Lord sustain you each day of your journey.



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# Rethinking Preaching

**Kar Wing Chan**  
Class 1992

Taking the subway to New York early in the morning, I felt bored in the crowded car. My eyes were too tired to read; my mind could not focus on music. Hanging onto an overhead strap, I closed my eyes to rest. Suddenly an African American next to me moved forward and said loudly, "Ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention. Life passes swiftly. One day we have to face God. The Bible says all have sinned. How can we face God? Jesus Christ was born to bear our sins, dying on the Cross. Believe on Jesus, and you will have eternal life." At first I was shocked by the strong voice of the "prophet," thinking that there would be an urgent announcement. A few seconds later I realized that was "forcing others to hear the Gospel." I admired him, wondering how he would preach under the circumstance and how the audience would react. Many riders showed no expression, as if the preacher were transparent. Some rolled their eyes; some raised their brows, showing impatience; some gave him strange looks, considering him mad. The sermon lasted only a

minute. It came and went suddenly. The preacher stopped after several sentences, and the riders resumed their former selves, as if nothing had happened. The subway continued to move nosily until the last stop, the World Trade Center. I don't know why I connected my thought to my life as a preacher in the church. I had not experienced the weird occurrence, but the expressionless faces of the riders looked familiar. The trial of preaching can only be known through experience.

No matter what, preaching is the main channel of shepherding a church. There are times of doubt and disappointment, but preachers still need to persevere and give their best. Preaching is not easy. The joys and pains of shepherding can only be understood by those who have had gone through it. To pastors, the weekly sermon undoubtedly is a big challenge that must be faced. Regardless of the response of the audience and what conflicts they are facing themselves, preachers have to suppress their emotions and feed, faithfully and in a

timely manner, giving their best. Contrary to the subway preacher, after preaching, the pastor has to face the congregation and to be responsible for their feedback with different messages. In average, a pastor preaches three times weekly. In a year there would be one hundred fifty-six sermons. In ten years that would be over one thousand and fifty different sermons. The difficulty of preaching is comparable to childbirth by women. Pastors have to "give birth" over one hundred and fifty times yearly. Each child has to be different, and the examples cannot be repeated. (Be careful, brothers and sisters usually cannot remember the content of the sermon, but the examples they remember clearly and for a long time!) Without the grace of God and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, it is really hard to imagine how a pastor in a church for many years can produce so many sermons feeding God's flock.

I graduated from seminary for the first time in 1973. At that time I thought I could do all. When in the field, I learned of the many challenges

of serving in churches that had not been mentioned in the classroom of the seminary. Fifteen years later, I studied further in the seminary. Upon graduating for the second time, I felt more and more inadequate. I felt especially deficient in preaching and strived to improve. While being a pastor, I took time to study further. Last year I graduated from seminary for the third time, majoring in homiletics. I learned a lot of preaching skills, and I realized deeply that in order to have an effective sermon, it is not through skill, organization, nor the quality of the congregation, but the working of the Holy Spirit. Although the preacher prepares thoroughly, if God's Spirit is not working in people's hearts, the effect cannot be lasting. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit" (Zechariah 4:6). At the same time, experience lets me understand that if the sermon has not moved the preacher himself, it will not move the congregation. If the preacher has not practiced the sermon, he cannot expect the congregation to put it into practice. Therefore, each week I spend a lot of time meditating on Scriptures, examining myself, waiting prayerfully until the Spirit of God speaks to me through the Bible, and I respond inward. Then I start to prepare the sermon.

Preaching is a pastor's most important ministry! I will never forget the advice of my homiletics teacher

Rev. Philip Teng. Many times he warned us that, regardless of how busy we are in the church, preaching has to be the priority. The best should be given faithfully on the pulpit. If a preacher spends most of his time preparing sermons, preaching and praying, he will have no regrets. Having ministered for many years, I look back on my path. I have found it true. I further realize, of course, it is difficult to prepare a sermon. Yet more important is the spiritual life of the pastor. One cannot give what one does not possess. The relationship between God and the preacher is the foundation of ministering on the pulpit. It certainly cannot be replaced by homiletics. The relationship of a preacher and his devotional life is closely knit and inseparable.



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# A Life of Ministry

Jerry Moy  
Class 1993

Praise the Lord for His grace and leading! It has been fifteen years of serving the Lord since I graduated from seminary in 1993.

## God's Calling

In early 1988, after many prayers for guidance, I finally answered God's calling for me to go into full-time ministry. I applied for seminary training in Alliance Theological Seminary. Consequently, in September of the same year, I started my part-time study as a commuting student. During the day, I continued to work full-time for Chemical Bank in New York City, and after work I would drive over an hour to Nyack, New York to take evening classes. I enrolled in the Master of Divinity in Chinese studies program, which was established by the Reverend Philip Teng.

## Preparation For Service

One year had passed of two evening classes a week. I realized that I only completed eleven credits. At that rate, it would take another ten

years to graduate. I prayed, "Dear Lord, if you want me for full-time ministry, please open a door for me and allow me to serve you as early as I could, and not wait until I am old." Beginning the second year of my study, in addition to the two weekly evenings classes, there were two intensive periods of courses, lasting one or two weeks each period. I took my vacation days to attend those courses. And so with that rate at the end of the second year, I was able to complete close to thirty credits. Praise the Lord.

At the beginning of my third year of study, God let the seminary start Saturday morning classes for which I also registered. Although I was still a commuting part-time student, the progress was equivalent to a full-time student. My fourth year of study was the most difficult because some major core courses were offered only during the day Monday through Friday. I prayed to God again: "Dear Lord, fourth year already, I know you won't allow me to stop now. Please open a door for me so that I may continue

to work and study." I discussed my situation with my manager at the bank, who is a devout Christian. She too, loves the Lord dearly. She spoke to the Senior Vice President and approved a special vacation request, which allowed me to take my vacation days as I needed. In other words, the days I spent at the seminary to study were my vacation days. This approval was unusual because company policy was that the vacation days must be taken 2-weeks consecutively. Accordingly, for the fourth and fifth year of my study, I spent one full day per week at the seminary; thus, I completed four and a half years of seminary training. Upon the completion of my last class in the morning, I went back to the bank in the afternoon and handed in my resignation.

## Reflection of Service

January 1993 – I started full-time ministry as the English-speaking minister at Jireh Church of Oversea Chinese Mission (OCM). In October 1994, I was

transferred to OCM Grace Church as the Chinese-speaking minister. After a good seven and a half year period of serving at OCM Grace Church, I came back to Jireh Church as the Chinese-speaking minister, where I am still serving since March 2002.

I must admit that there are many joys and difficulties in ministry but the joys outweigh the difficult times. There are many challenges in ministry: time management, communication with groups of different ages and different backgrounds, and resolving conflicts between co-workers, families, and friends. Through such challenges, I have learned valuable lessons.

For the last fifteen years, I have learned to lift my eyes to the Lord, for He is my refuge and strength. God is faithful, and He never changes. God's calling is the best and most glorious. Our reward is not from men, but God. As long as we know our identity and stand firm in God's teaching, we would be able to complete the task of service.

Another lesson that I have learned is that no matter how busy our schedules may be, the pulpit ministry cannot be overlooked. Three hours of sermon preparation is different from twenty hours of sermon preparation. Three hours of sermon preparation is a grade "C" sermon;

twenty hours of sermon preparation is a grade "A" sermon. The pulpit ministry will always play a vital role for God. With the power of the Holy Spirit and the investment of time in sermon preparations, the result will be evident – the church will be edified.

When times are negative or difficult, it is good to take a step back in order to see a broader horizon. Focus on the positive contributions. We can learn from each other. Treat each other with honesty and respect. Appreciate the differences between co-workers. Speak the truth out of love. Be humble. Always seek God's direction; God's intention is for us to build up the body of Christ.

On a personal note, I am also mindful of my family – their physical, psychological, and spiritual well-being. My wife and I are humans too, who also need rest, encouragement, friendship and family time. As such, every year my wife, our three children, and I try to schedule a family vacation to relax and re-strengthen. It is God's blessing to have a loving and supportive family. Indeed, "God cares for His workers more than the work of the workers." Serving God is a joyful and wonderful journey for me. It is a tremendous honor to be chosen by God, used by God, and be one of His co-workers. For the past fifteen years, I offered Him praises and thanksgiving; for the next fifteen years, I pray for grace and

wisdom. "Dear God, as for me and my household, I will serve the Lord. Amen."



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## Finally I am here...

Keith Loo  
First Year Student

Recently, I had a chance to take out an old songbook that I had when I was in College. It is a compilation of many songs that we sang in our college fellowship at that time. As I looked at this big thick binder with its faded and worn cover, my heart was filled with thankfulness as I thought of how much God had done in my life since then. As I opened the song book and saw the first song in there, I could not help but smile at the message that God wanted to remind me that day.

The first song was “For those tears I died.” I started reading through the lyrics, and the following section jumped out. “Savior, you opened all the right doors. And I thank you and praise you from earth’s humble shore... Take me, I’m yours.” When I first learned this song, I was a new believer. Since that time, God led me through a lot of changes in my life. I went from a single guy to a father of two. I also experienced pain and His grace when He took my parents

back to their heavenly home ten years apart. Through His own ways and timing, I took a long road to starting my M.Div. program at ATS this past September — on the same day that my daughter started high school.

Since I became a Christian in my college freshman year, I began to have opportunities to minister to people. It was around my senior year in College that the thought of moving from the field of engineering to a field that I could serve people first came up. Soon after graduating from college, I attended a mission conference and sensed the call to go into pastoral ministry. However, I was not willing to submit to God’s call. The reluctance to study more was a part of the concern. At that time, I felt that seminary education was just a necessary means for me to become a pastor. This reluctance, together with a desire for financial security and the excitement and enjoyment that I had from building up a consulting engineering business, caused me to put this idea of full time ministry on the back

burner. I continued to look for ministry opportunities that I could take advantage of without going through seminary. While the Holy Spirit prompted me about this call once in a while, I kept a busy enough schedule to allow myself not to deal with it head on.

Around the year 2000, I was asked to become an advisor for a Cantonese high school and college fellowship at church. Somehow, both of the leaders at the time left the group within a few months after I accepted their invitation to be the advisor (I still suspect that it was a setup on their part so that they could leave!) The group functioned with autonomy in many ways since the church did not have much of a Cantonese ministry. As a result, it allowed me to not only develop a close relationship with the brothers and sisters that I was ministering to, but I also had the chance to develop ministry skills that were more than those of a typical fellowship leader. For a while, I thought that God had

granted my wish and allowed me to minister without going to seminary.

However, as the college and high school students grew older, the needs of the group changed as well. As the ministry evolved, God brought the issue of full time ministry to the forefront again. From a practical standpoint, I saw my needs and my desire to spend more time with those that I was ministering to. I also sensed the need to have a seminary education to better prepare me as a servant. More importantly, God kept on reminding me about His call to go into ministry full time. I looked at God's faithfulness through all these years. He allowed me to enjoy my career as an engineer for over 20 years. He provided for my family and my needs in ways that I could never have dreamed of. He showed me that He is a God that could take care of all the concerns that I may have. It was time for me to give up what I had been holding onto and take this step.

As a result, here I am studying at ATS. Within the past few months, I saw that God has and will continue to open doors in my life. The training, struggles and experiences that I have gone through since becoming a Christian are all part of the preparation that He had intended for me. I have also experienced His assurance to me of His calling. In

particular, He assures me that even though from my own perspective it took me much longer than necessary to commit myself to serve Him full time, He accepts me the way I am, and I should not be held back by that guilt. He reminds me that He is a God that has His own timing. I look forward to the training that I will receive during my time at ATS, but, more importantly, I look forward to the work that He will do in me and through me.



# My Walk with God

Frank Huang  
First Year Student

Since I can remember I've been attending church. I've always loved to attend church every Sunday morning. Who wouldn't want to? We had someone to tell us a story, and at the end of every meeting there were cookies and sweets for us to eat. In addition to having the cookies and the sweets, as a special Sunday event, my mother would bring us to KFC in Taiwan. Growing up, I knew about Christianity.

At the age of nine I immigrated to the states and continued to attend church regularly. My thoughts about attending church was that it was something that everyone should do. Two pastors came into my life and flipped my life upside down. Pastors Daniel and Betty Hsueh have had a profound impact in my life. Before they came I thought that the church only existed within the four walls of the church. As they came to minister to my congregation I realized that there was so much more. I was never a consistent reader of the Bible, and as

they introduced the word of the Bible, I was amazed about how much relevance it had in our lives. They walked me through the Bible and gave me responsibilities to lead others. It was then that I really changed my life. I'd realized that I need to make a difference and that I needed to change the way I was living.

During that same time, we had a speaker that came to my church to pray for the youth. After a lot of struggles I decided to go to the meeting. My prayer was, "God, if you had a word for me, would you give it to me." Toward the end of the meeting, the speaker, pastor Anton Cruz, pointed directly at me and said he wanted to pray for me. I was shocked. I even thought he was talking to the person next to me. As he prayed over me and I began to cry, he told me about the Father's love that He has for His children. He continued to pray, and he told me about the tears that my mother shed for me. An image popped up in my mind. I remember as I was going to

the bathroom, my mom was sitting there crying. I asked my mom why she was crying, and she told me that she was praying for my sister and me. At that moment I had an encounter with God. Pastor Anton continued to pray that God has seen all your mom's tears. At that moment God became so real to me. It was no longer something that people talk about; it's something more tangible. God is there, and I wanted it. As he told me that I would go into ministry, I cried even louder. In my mind I was saying to myself that I don't want to be poor, but God has a sense of humor. Looking back, I see that God was really preparing me.

It wouldn't be until another year later that I made my decision to go to seminary. In my heart God has given me the burden to serve Him. However there was also some apprehension and fear in my heart. So I'd pray to God that if I were to go to seminary, I didn't want to go alone. In the summer of 2005, two of my

## Pastors' Retreat 2007

friends decided that they would attend Alliance Theological Seminary. At the same time my youth pastor from ten years ago came and told me about a vision that he has of doing an after school program in the church. They needed to have a full time worker. The two criteria I needed were here in front of me. That would be the last confirmation for me. I didn't want to hold off anymore on the plan that God might have for me.

So far in Alliance Theological Seminary, I've been challenged, and I love this community that we have. People I've met at ATS have been so helpful and supportive. God is continuing to shape and transform me. Praise God.



Pastors' Retreat 2007 was held from March 19-20. This is a retreat especially designed to provide ministry enrichment and support for Chinese pastors.

The theme for this year was "*Death and Dying*", through workshops and discussions exploring different issue a person would face at the end of a life, getting ourselves as well as our churches ready for it.



We especially have invited Dr. Michael Gillern, a professor of the School of Counseling at ATS, to give a workshop on "Bereavement process"

Alumni of the Chinese Studies Program were happy to get to know each other and fellowship with one another.



Co-workers learned from one another through exchanging insights and ministry experience.

# NEWS

## Commencement 2007



At the farewell party for the graduates, we sent forward our blessings to the graduates.



Commencement was a joyful moment in all graduates' lives which marked the end of a chapter as well as the beginning of a new chapter. All graduates will continue to strive for the best for God.

### ***Ministries of the Graduates of 2007***

***Adam Chu*** is waiting for new assignment from the Lord after graduation.

***Carl Fitzgerald*** has a burden to serve among the Chinese. He is seeking ministry opportunity in the Chinese community.

***Yang Lan*** will continue to pursue further theological education.

***Heung Wing Lau*** will begin his externship at Queens Herald Church, NY in June.

***Jim Huei Cheng Liu*** will serve as an extern at the Chinese Bible Church of Maryland for a year beginning from June.

***Julie Lok*** will continue to attend and serve as a layleader at Queens Herald Church, NY.

***Jun Ren*** and his wife ***Jane Yu Chen Cheng*** are graduating together along with their baby girl, Mercy. They are still waiting for full-time ministry opportunity from the Lord.

## Alumni Update

### ***New Ministry***

**James Chung** (May 1996) will soon go to a new mission field in Asia with C&MA after a year of furlough in New York.

**William Hu** (Dec 2006) took on the pastoral role at his home church Danbury Chinese Alliance Church after graduated in December of 2006. He has served as an elder of the church for many years.

**Calvin Kar Wing Tran** (May 1992) has joined the staff of New York Chinese Alliance Church, NY since the summer of 2006.

**Angela Tsui** (Dec 2006) went back to Hong Kong after graduated from seminary in December of 2006. She will join the staff of a Baptist church serving as a youth worker in May.

**Ngai Man Wu** (May 2001) has began a new ministry at New York Ling Liang Church in March of 2007.

## Courses Offered in Fall 2007

### **Rockland Campus**

#### ***Chinese Preaching I***

Instructor: Rev. Stanley Kwong

Date and Time: August 29 - December 12 , Wednesday, 9:00am -12:00pm

#### ***Worship in the Chinese Church***

Instructor: Dr. John Ng

Date and Time: August 29 - December 12 , Wednesday, 6:15pm - 9:15pm

## Courses Offered in Winterm 2007

### **Rockland Campus**

#### ***Mission Outreach in the Chinese Church***

Instructor: Dr. Cyrus Lam

Date and Time: Jan 7 - 11, 2008 , Monday to Friday, 8:30am -4:30pm

For information, please contact:

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