



# First Quarter Newsletter



## Season of Thanksgiving

Pastor Henry Mak

As author of this article, the festival of Easter has special meaning since I was baptized in Easter. This is a day in remembrance of Jesus Christ, the son of God, who willingly bore the sin of the world and crucified on the cross to bring salvation to mankind. However, the Lord overcame death and was raised from the dead, thereby giving resurrected life to all who believe in Him!

Disciples had witnessed Jesus bringing Lazarus back to life, as depicted in John 11, revived the only son of the widow in the town called Nain (Luke 7:11-17) and also revived the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:53-55). These people were resurrected, but still would die again eventually. On the contrary, Jesus was resurrected into an immortal body, a heavenly being. What do all these mean for us?

I. Resurrection of the Lord brings peace and joy.

“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.” (John 20:19-20).

Why were the disciples overjoyed? It was because the Lord they saw then was a body not restrained by space and substance. The previous words of Jesus were proven to be

true; He really is the only begotten son sent by God. He was persecuted, killed and raised from the dead on the third day. All these have been fulfilled. The resulting joy cannot be taken away by any means. The joy has eradicated all the preceding anxiety, fear, disturbance and disappointment. The disciples have really received the peace coming from the Lord.

We have all experienced disappointment and perplexity after our conversion, such as prayers unanswered, despised by our spouse, the long waited love relationship comes to an end, no response to our job applications and the lingering torture by sickness. These are all disheartening things. In spite of all these, when the moment of God finally arrives, He will make the best things happening to us in the best moment. God is faithful and He must watch over and guide us. For this reason, Paul said in Romans 12:12, “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

II. Resurrection of the Lord brings mission and blessings.

Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” (John 20:21).

Apart from cure of fear and doubt in their hearts, the Lord also gave mission to His disciples. They would be sent out by the Lord, bear witness to the Lord’s resurrection, preach the way of repentance and eternal life through believing in Lord Jesus. Nowadays, the Lord also sends us out in the same way to witness for Him, be



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a blessing of other people. How can we be the blessing of someone else? This involves making our family members including our children disciples of Christ. In our work place, we witness the might of our Lord, urge people to repent, listen to and believe in the gospel to receive pardon of sins, the greatest blessing. Jesus Christ came to search for the lost. We are commissioned by the Lord to continue His work on earth.

III. Resurrection of the Lord brings the power of Holy Spirit.

And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. (John 20:22).

When Jesus was arrested by soldiers, His disciples hid away separately, some denounced Him, some still did not fully believe in Him. After the death of Christ, His followers stayed in one place in the fear of being captured. Yet after the appearance of the resurrected Jesus, the disciples completely turned around. They proclaimed in Jerusalem that Jesus was the savior and the Messiah of Jews. They were courageous enough to preach the resurrection of Jesus Christ, call people to repent and trust in the Lord. What was the motivating force enabling these desperate disciples to suffer for a crucified Messiah even to the point of death? It was all because of the encounter with the resurrected Jesus, they saw with their own eyes the mighty power and majesty of the Lord. Everything said by the Lord were true. He will certainly return to judge the world and bring the disciples into His glory.

Lord Jesus had repeatedly indicated that after He received His glory, the Holy Spirit would be sent to His believers. Now that the Lord has risen from the dead, already glorified, the Holy Spirit coming onto disciples commissioned by Jesus fulfilled His promise. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came onto every believer with great power. Signs and wonders accompanied the preaching of disciples, bringing many people to repent and commit to Lord Jesus. This was the might of the Holy Spirit. The old dream of apostles had been crucified. Seeing the resurrection of Christ and being filled by the Holy Spirit, they bore witness with their mouth and their lives, even willingly laid down their life for the cause.

Weak as we are, how can we ever preach the gospel and lead people to Christ? Be aware that the Holy Spirit has been given to every church, every believer who has sincerely repented, received Jesus Christ as their savior. To succeed in the mission, we must stay close to our Lord and trust in the Holy Spirit. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," says the LORD Almighty." (Zechariah 4:6).

Life application:

Is our commemoration of the resurrected Lord Jesus stuck in a historical event happening two thousands years ago? Do we have the living Jesus Christ in our life, enabling us to be His witnesses? How can we be effective witnesses for Lord Jesus?



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## 1. Put commemoration into witnessing action.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is certainly very important. However, how can people believe without seeing? God has sent many witnesses testifying to the fact that a living Christ does turn people's life around. The effect of a living Christ is visible to everybody so that they can be convinced that Jesus has really risen from the dead. The disciples in the early church were under great danger and suppression. They put their life on the line to testify for the resurrection of Jesus. Nowadays, this should not be remembered only as a historical event, but most importantly, bring awareness to the dwelling of living Christ in the life of every believer. Christ brings a brand new attitude of life. We have to bear witness, let others see the hope and spirited life of resurrection we received.

## 2. From desperation to hope through resurrection.

Sin and death often bring desperation and depression, sorrow and grief. The pain is especially unbearable when we are trapped in our own sins, unable to break free. This is an inescapable reality every time we face the moment of our own or our relative's death. However, Jesus Christ has died for us and risen from the dead. He has conquered death and freed us all from its reign. We will also rise with our believing family members. Even though we may still feel the pain of separation resulting from death, be reminded of the glorious eternal hope promised by Christ.

## 3. Emancipated from the control of sin and live a holy life.

How should we live our life in the great power of Christ's resurrection? If a Christian does not believe in resurrection of the physical body, he is no difference from non-believers. He will live a life of debauchery, indulgence and promiscuity, thereby trashing his body of flesh. Testimony of the Lord's resurrection cannot be achieved by spreading it by mouth everywhere, but must be accompanied by demonstration of this new life for others to see, so as to draw them towards the mighty power of resurrection. Therefore, believers of Christ should pursue a holy life, stay away from the wicked behavior or promiscuity, and incessantly learn about God through our life experience. The hope of resurrection motivates us to serve God. Every one of us who has experienced the power of resurrection would certainly commit our life to God, live for Him and serve Him diligently.



## Baptism Testimonial (1)

Jonathan Li

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

“I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot.”

I have frequent encounters with the gospel of Jesus Christ as I grew up. However, all I could touch was the bottom of the cross, the part that



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was buried in soil. I continued to live in darkness, unaware of my life being surrounded by sins. Sure enough, every now and then I could feel the conviction of my conscience, which I brushed aside. I lived a life with no direction, no purpose and no meaning on earth. I was contented with mediocrity in everything, spending my life frivolously, with no serious ambition. It was fine with me as long as I did not come in last. In times of success, I felt relaxed. When accused of failure, I wrapped myself up in thick skin and just laughed it away, exactly like what people called “a heartless snake”.

One fine day, the right moment came. About two years ago, things were not working out for me. I was further aggravated by grievances out of the vast difference in growing conditions from my wife. Though we did not pose open verbal attacks, our words still hurt each other. I considered all these ordinary life experience and never took it to heart. It did not bother me how things turn out against my will. I guess that no matter how carefree you used to be, when calamities strike, anxiety will show with the loss of peace and joy. You are left with only trouble and worries. How great and wonderful are the acts of God! To Him belongs all the glory and praise forever. In October of last year, my older brother who is a pastor came from Australia, together with his wife to visit my mother. They stayed with my mother for a whole month, but did not tell me about the Gospel. Before their departure, my sister-in-law gave me more than ten copies of Chinese Today (published by Chinese Christian Mission), encouraged me to read at my leisure. Since then, I have been reading the Bible on my own. In a summer retreat, I committed

myself to Christ in faith. I am so grateful for God’s mercy, care and guidance. His saving grace is beyond compare, so great that even a wreck like me could be reunited with Him. There is nothing more secure than standing on the solid foundation of Jesus Christ.

Knowing the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. His word is the source of joy. Since my conversion, empowered by the Bible and grace of God, I am able to consider all the people and things I used to find intolerable a gift from God. “In all things God works for the good of those who love him.” The more I resolve to renew myself, the more efficient is the act of Holy Spirit. What I used to consider as the shortcomings of my wife have been converted to her lovable features within a short period. Living according to the word of our Lord: “Do to others what you would have them do to you”, the affection between me and my wife grows with time. The teachings of our Lord can be applied to our daily life, our social interactions, energizing and filled with joy. Thanks be to God for making me understand the importance of exploring His word everyday and hiding His word in my heart. Sins that sprang out from undisciplined areas of life can be subdued by the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. I have already been a slave of my own desires for forty-nine years, I was totally emancipated through the grace of Jesus Christ in my fiftieth year. The promise of jubilee is such a great blessing. May the whole world be able to accept one more teaching of Lord Jesus: "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."



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Dear Father, I praise you for accepting me in your service and witnessing for you. I will yet praise you for your revelation of the truth, for the honor of living in your temple, admire your glorious majesty, consult you in your sanctuary and listen to your instructions every moment. Dear Lord, my thirst for you is ever multiplying, burning intensely. You are filled with vibrant glory. There is nothing apart from the radiant light of your grace. In spite of that, I beg your pardon for my slowness in coming to terms with certain important matters. Please reveal to me your kind and amiable image, make me to be pleasing in your sight, lead me into perfection and become a blessing to the people around me. May everything I write and pray be accomplished according to the will of Father, in the name of our savior Lord, Amen.



## Baptism Testimonial (2)

Bobby Leung

When I was 5 years old, I entered a Christian kindergarten. I got to know our Savior Jesus Christ under my teacher's guidance.

Due to the different religions of my elders in the family, due to immigration, and due to having my own family and the way I looked at family members' religious belief; a lot of questions and opinions were formed. On the other hand, due to the material need and needs of daily life, there was a long period of time that my belief toward Jesus Christ was not solid. It was like the kind of seed on light soil, there was no fruit.

Fortunately in these two years, God has continuously blessed me through Holy Spirit. Under the days of continuously praying and reading the bible, once again I have found God's salvation and truth. I decided to admit my sins before God and asked for God's forgiveness in order to depend on my Father in Haven whole heartedly, hoping to be a born again Christian.

After accepting Christ as my Savior, I have noticed changes in my home, my work and my daily life. Existing anger turned into auspicious, selfishness turned into compassion, continuously assisting brothers and sisters with their needs. The way I talk to people has turned to be temperate, happiness fills my heart. The best change is in this memory verse, "Have no fear, only have faith". I am happy and have the courage to discuss with brothers and sisters regarding to God's salvation, I really enjoy it.

This is why I wish to join this church and be baptized, become part of this congregation and God's body, so that I can be on the path to eternity. So I can also spread the gospel to other people. Thank you Lord. May all the graces belong to you.



## Baptism Testimonial (3)

Amenda Wong

I want to get baptized so that I can be a witness to God, and to show people that I am a follower of Christ. I am very grateful because I'm so blessed with such a wonderful family. Every time I get closer to God and understand more of



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the bible, Satan will stay farther away. Whenever life gets difficult, I can just pray to God. Although those problems won't be solved immediately, I am assured that there will be a solution.

Another reason why I want to get baptized is because I understand that it is what God desires us to do. Just because you get baptized does not mean that you are guaranteed to go to heaven. Baptism is just a symbolic way to show that you truly believe that Jesus died for our sins. What I think about his sacrifice is that we really don't deserve anything he gives us and yet he loves us no matter what. If you understand and believe in Christ, then your choice should be to get baptized without hesitation. Satan can be persuasive, but we can resist his temptation with the help from God. Once you have believed, you stay with what you believe in for the rest of your life. You should never let your faith waver.

I choose to dedicate my life to worship and obey Him because I have no doubt that God is real. People might never understand how God works his miracles and why your friends or family members die from illness or an accident, but I know that it is all part of God's plan. If you think you believe and obey God, but people say that you don't act anything like a Christian, then you should examine yourself until you see what you are doing wrong.



## Baptism Testimonial (4)

Wilson Wong

I want to be baptized because I believe that Jesus died for us. I want to go to heaven to be

with God in his holy kingdom. Being baptized symbolizes that I die with Jesus, rise with Jesus and will turn my back on sin. Satan will always try to tempt us, but Jesus will give me the power to resist all temptations. God will always lead us in the right path all we have to do is believe and he will guide us. Being baptized is about doing what pleases God and what is good in God's eyes. Eternal life is given to you from God when we believe that Jesus was God's only son, sent to die and wash away our sins. These are the many reasons why I want to be baptized.



## Baptism Testimonial (5)

Samantha Lee

By being baptized, you are committed to your faith. I am ready to commit my life to Jesus Christ. I believe that Jesus gave his life for all sinners. In John 3:16, it says, "for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, so that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life." I believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose again on the third day. This is what the gospel means to me.



## A Beautiful Picture

Donna Yung

The Israelites left the Egyptian land of slavery where they have resided for four hundred years. Regaining freedom, they could build the tabernacle to worship God. We are also aliens, gathering on borrowed premises for twenty



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four years. This is the day our dream comes true, building the church of God with inexpressible excitement.

As recorded in Exodus 35:4-5, "Moses said to the whole Israelite community, "This is what the LORD has commanded: From what you have, take an offering for the LORD. Everyone who is willing is to bring to the LORD an offering of gold, silver and bronze." God's people immediately responded to the great grace of God with action. "Everyone who was willing and whose heart moved him came and brought an offering to the LORD" as depicted by Exodus 35:21, 22, 29. The word "willing" repeatedly appeared in the scripture, depicting an action of delight, a feeling of great honor for the opportunity to present offering to God. Brothers and sisters, the new church building project has been kicked off. Let us respond to the God's calling, willingly present our offering to Him. God requires us to bring Him gifts out of our possessions.

Exodus 35:31, 35 also reported that God filled the people with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts, to engage in all kinds of artistic craftsmanship for building of tabernacle. Therefore, apart from monetary contribution, we can also bring out the various gifts given by God; collaborate with each other to accomplish the church building mission.

A beautiful picture appears before us. Motivated by God, people followed His command and continued to bring freewill offerings morning after morning (Exodus 36:3) so that there were more than enough for the work on the sanctuary (Exodus 36:5). Finally, in Exodus 36:6, Moses has to give an order that

no man or woman is to make anymore offering for the sanctuary, "because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work." (Exodus 36:7).

My dear brothers and sisters, do you hear the command of our Lord? Are you willing to follow? Is your heart moved? May the Holy Spirit motivates us, makes us willing to respond to God all the time with our continuous offering, so that we have everything needed, even more than enough for building of our church. Wish that our contributions paint a beautiful picture, radiant and attractive, bringing glory to the name of our Lord.



## Recap for Our Annual Meeting

### Strong Reporter

On January 23, 2010, 28 members attended the annual meeting. The meeting's objective was to review our various church ministries in the year 2009 and our future plans for the year 2010. The meeting was kicked off with Pastor Mak's opening prayer and our praising hymns to God led by Salina. The hymns "The Church's One Foundation" and "Wonderful Words of Life" witness that our church is founded on Jesus Christ and His Word is amazingly working in our lives.

Pastor Mak shared the message from Philippians 1:1-11 about the characteristics of the Philippians church in a sermon. In summary, there were three major points: 1) A stable church with sound structure. 2) A faithful church with Christ loving women and



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3) An united church with diverse evangelical activities. Pastor Mak encouraged us to follow the example of the Philippians church and we sang the hymn “Building the People of Power” as our responses.

There were times for each church councilor to present his or her departmental report. You can read all the details from our church annual report. There were wonderful accomplishments. For any shortcomings, we hope to find ways to improve them. Pastor Mak set our church 2010 goal as “Renewal in Word and Prayer” and encouraged all church councilors to come up with measurable goals in the ministry. He even proposed the measurable 2010 church goals as follows: 1) ten new believers 2) five baptisms and 3) a Sunday service attendance of 120 or more. Everyone needs to be united and work hard in order to accomplish these goals.

The last thing for the annual meeting was the review of January church council meeting details. David led us through the review and Wendy explained the financial reports to our members. The most important thing was getting the approval of the 2010 financial budget from our members. With our church building renovation project in progress and completion scheduled in 2010, our financial needs are tremendous and we need to monitor our finances closely. Finally with the votes of **26** “For” and 0 “Against”, the 2010 financial budget was successfully approved. Our unity demonstrated our commitment to work hard on our various church ministries and complete the church building in the year ahead.



## Thanksgiving

Au Shang Or

Hallelujah! In a glimpse of time, it comes the time for thanksgiving. It seems just like yesterday when looking back. I can see how God leads our church step by step. For this spiritual home and the wonderful holy temple was approved after two public hearings. Next, we need to start planning the renovation and the signing of the purchase and sale contract and many tedious matters to follow. Thanks to God who leads our pastor, minister, deacons and our elite brothers and sisters. They endure hardship and commit their time, money and effort working for this spiritual home. Pray to God for giving them the wisdom and good health to work on our church building project. I know their work for God is not fruitless. May all the glory and praises to our heavenly father! Amen!



## Let Us Praise Our Lord Together

Irene Ho

2009 will pass by soon. In retrospect, our country is in deep recession. All industries suffer badly and unemployment rate is skyrocket high. With such worse situation, our church not only has a balanced financial inflow and outflow, but also is able to purchase a new church building. What a miracle!

Our Heavenly Father dearly loves us and pours out His blessings to us. Now our long time



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hope to have our own church building is finally met. This is really exciting for us! I hope our brothers and sisters could bravely face the many challenges for the church building.

As long as we believe that we are in partnership with God for this great job of church building, God would guide and protect us. Let us overcome all the difficulties and swiftly complete our church building. All the glory to the holy name of our God!

Earlier during November before the day of Thanksgiving, our Mission department encouraged brothers and sisters to express our hearts of thanksgiving to God, therefore joined with Women Fellowship to host the “Come together to thank our Lord” evening meeting on November 7, 2009. Everyone came together and joyfully counted the many blessings from God.

In that evening, we had Women Fellowship “Pot Luck” dinner as usual. Mission department prepared two delicious roast turkeys for us to eat. This was an early celebration of Thanksgiving with everyone. After dinner, first we had the regular Women Fellowship meeting and then we started “Come together to thank our Lord” meeting.

First, several sisters like Auntie 8, Lisa, Po Ching and myself gave our thanksgiving sharing. We told everyone how God poured out His amazing grace to us and encouraged everyone with a thankful heart to trust God in everything. Salina used her gentle and beautiful voice to sing the hymn “God like a shining morning star” to praise God. Salina’s

singing and lyrics had enchanted not only Pastor Mak but also all of us.

We were truly blessed as it was our first time that we could see the public performance of the Harris and Jennifer’s family with Hillary and Ryan and Priscilla with her three daughters Ellen, Emily and Eva. They used different musical instruments with singing and reading to express their thanksgiving to God. We praised and envied for their superb performance.

Next Yvonne shared her thanksgiving testimony with us. She chose the lyrics from hymn “Count Many Blessings” and read to us with her passion and thankfulness. Everybody on the floor was greatly inspired. They all clapped hands to support her heart responding to God’s love and grace.

Auntie 8 read to us Psalms 150 – “You should praise for Jehovah.” She read out this poem with great passion and once again called us to remember to praise God regardless of whatever situation we were experiencing.

Lastly, I played a game with everyone. There were 4 teams and each team member in ten minutes need to be united to come up with all the gracious gifts God gave to our church in this year. The winner of the game was a team with most counted gifts. There were one or two teams that came up with questionable items but they all had creativity. Under the sound of laughing and applause, the team with most counted gifts became the champion. Everyone had laughed for the whole evening and it was a memorable evening filled with thanksgiving.



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Our heavenly father! We used testimony, hymns, musical instruments, reading and game to present our offertory of truthful thankfulness to you that we believe you had gladly accepted.



## Church News

Our events during the first quarter:

- 1/23/10 – Annual Meeting was held in Youth Center.
- 2/06/10 – Women Fellowship hosted the Chinese New Year Celebration banquet in Youth Center.
- 2/27/10 – Jacob Fellowship hosted the “Hot Pot” gathering in Youth Center.
- 3/7/10 – Women’s Day worship.
- 3/20/10 – Mission Department hosted the “Create a New Heart Together” evangelical meeting in Youth Center.

Upcoming events in next quarter:

- 4/2/10 – Good Friday service at 7:30 p.m. in Youth Center. Let us come together to remember the Lord.
- 4/9/10– 4/11/10 – Youth Retreat lead by Katlyn.
- 6/19/10 – Mission Department will have the “Big Mission, Small Role” gospel training

Pray fervently and share the mission:

- For 2010, our church theme is “Renew with Word and Prayer.” Let us encourage one another and support our church.
- For 2010 Bible Reading campaign, our goal is to complete reading the Old Testament from 2 Chronicles to

Malachi in a year. Please be steadfast to read the Bible daily.

- 2010 Church Building Offertory first installment is \$200,000.00. We urge brothers and sisters to support this offertory wholeheartedly to build God’s home.



## Prayer Requests

1. Please pray fervently for the church building project.
  - i) Ask God to provide suitable contractors to complete the various renovation projects.
  - ii) Ask God to keep all the workers safe and free from injury.
  - iii) We need to raise a fund of twenty thousand dollars for the renovation project. Ask God to motivate brothers and sisters to contribute willingly.
  - iv) Pray for the unity of brothers and sisters, collaborating zealously for building of the church.
2. Remember Katie Lam in your prayer. She is the candidate for baptism on April 04, 2010. Ask God to keep her faith strong, excel in her spiritual life.
3. Remember the bible reading campaign and ask God to strengthen brothers and sisters in their commitment to daily bible reading, maintaining a close relationship with our Lord.
4. Intercede for the Mandarin fellowship. Ask God to edify Mandarin speaking brothers and sisters, encourage them to keep gathering and worshipping God.



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5. Intercede for the Brother Cedric Cheung and his wife, the missionaries supported by our church. Pray for God's guidance for the family of four, their quick adaptation to the new environment at Chengtu, provide all their needs so that they can be effective witnesses of the Lord.
6. Intercede for our church members:
  - i) Mrs. Grace Yuen has to continue regular hemodialysis. Ask God to grant her peace and ease during the procedure.
  - ii) Ask God to care for Sister Koon Wan Chow-Wong's arthritic pain.
  - iii) Sister Xu Gui Yun has an expected date of child delivery in June, 2010. Pray for the health of her baby and uneventful delivery.
  - iv) Intercede for the unemployed brothers and sisters in their job search. Ask God to provide their daily needs and a suitable new position.