



基督工人中心

**CHRISTIAN WITNESS CENTER**

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## **April 2025 Prayer Lette**

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Peace to you in the Lord!

### **“But each one should be careful how he builds” (1 Corinthians 3:10)**

On March 28th, a 7.9 magnitude earthquake struck Myanmar. As of early April, it has caused over 3,000 deaths, more than 4,000 injuries, and around 300 people are still missing. Geographically, Myanmar is located in an earthquake zone, so tremors are not uncommon. However, what is surprising about this earthquake is that neighboring countries, Thailand and China, were also affected. The capital of Thailand, Bangkok, is more than 621 miles away from the epicenter (almost the distance from Kansas City, Missouri to Houston, Texas). Although high-rise buildings in Bangkok swayed during the earthquake, and water from rooftop swimming pools was shaken out, the only building that collapsed was an unfinished 30-story office building of the Audit Bureau, which resulted in nearly 20 deaths and 70 injuries. A week has passed since the disaster, and 78 people are still missing. After the earthquake, people began to examine the cause. Bangkok itself is situated on soft soil, which makes it susceptible to earthquake shockwaves. However, since 2009, the Thai government has required all new buildings to comply with seismic construction regulations. So, the question arose: why did only this one skyscraper under construction collapse? It turned out to be a poorly constructed project, using substandard materials to cut costs. As a result, the earthquake led to so many casualties. This kind of shoddy construction, which results in significant loss of life, was also the main cause of the devastating earthquakes in Taiwan (921) and Sichuan, China.

This made me ponder how we, Christians, are building in the eyes of God. What is the root and foundation of our faith? Is it built on sand? When the rain falls, the floods come, and the winds blow and beat against that house, will it collapse? Or is it built on the rock (Matthew 7:26-27)? I once shared about the importance of foundation in a previous newsletter, but this incident of the skyscraper collapsing in Bangkok reminded me of something else: What is the material we are using to build our lives?

1 Corinthians 3:10 says: "But each man must be careful how he builds on it," "For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is {to be} revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." (1 Corinthians 3:11-15).

For those who have come to the North America to study or work, it can be said that they are among one of the blessed with advantages, and excellent in intelligence and talent. Likewise, the brothers and sisters in the church are also elite members! They can comprehend the Bible quickly, and when the external environment is favorable, both individuals and churches can maintain a state of "thriving." However, it is undeniable that after the pandemic, the entire churches in North America seems to have been greatly affected, becoming very weak. The enthusiasm for evangelism and leading people to believe in the Lord has diminished, fellowship in-person meetings are often replaced by online meetings, and the passion for serving has also

cooled down. As a result, not only are individuals struggling to stand firm, but the attendance at church gatherings has also decreased. What we rely on to sustain ourselves is only the "stored grain" from the past, with no new or fresh insights from God. We do not know when the next "pandemic or economic crisis" (like an earthquake) will hit. Are we adequately equipped to face it? This is something we need to seriously be aware! We need to constantly strive before God, building ourselves and the church with gold, silver, and precious stones. The May Training and the May Lay-minister Training are approaching. Let us encourage one another and not focus our time only on leisure enjoyment. Let us come together to be edified, equipped, and run quickly to follow the Lord with all saints!

## **Turning Back to God**

(by Rev. Dennis Wong)

What does "turning back to God" mean? I would like to reflect on this question through Romans 2:7 which says, "to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." The good deeds of people generally refer to helping others and doing good things. However, the "good deeds" mentioned in Romans 2:7 refer to seeking three things: "glory," "honor," and "immortal blessings."

But what do "glory, honor, and immortality, eternal life" refer to? In fact, these three concepts appear repeatedly in Romans chapter 1. Although people knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks (1:21). On the contrary, they exchanged "the glory of the incorruptible God" for "an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures". (1:23). Even more, they indulged in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies had been "dishonored" among them (1:24), and gave themselves up to "degrading" passions (1:26). Therefore, we can clearly see that "seeking glory" refers to seeking to glorify God, "honor" refers to honoring God with our bodies (not engaging in shameful acts driven by lust), and "seeking immortality" refers to worshiping the immortal God alone.

Disciples of Christ are not only called to do good, but Romans also urges us to "persist" in doing good, which means seeking God's glory with "perseverance." In the parable of the sower, Jesus also said, "the {seed} in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance." (Luke 8:15). Thus, it is not easy to glorify God in all things while living in this world, and we will face many challenges. We need to bear fruit that glorifies God through perseverance. "Persistence/ perseverance" is a key term in Romans. Romans 5:3-4 tells us, "And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope."

In Romans 8:25-26, it also says, "But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it. In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for {us} with groanings too deep for words." Finally, in Romans 15:5-6, Paul blesses the believers, saying, "Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Indeed, the new life we receive in Christ's grace allows us to produce "perseverance" even in times of suffering. Moreover, our Father God is the God who gives perseverance, and the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all at work in our hearts, empowering us to persist in seeking God's glory.

Now let us return to the word "seek." "Seeking" refers to both direction and desiring. Our hearts should be directed toward God, desiring His glory. In our daily lives, we focus on one thing: How can we please the Lord? When God's glory is our desire, even in the midst of difficulties, we will persevere, patiently seeking God. Therefore, when we say we are "turning back to God," we are turning back to God in direction. Originally, we sought human glory on earth, but now we seek God's glory. In the past, we acted according to our own desires, but now we do all things for the honor of the Lord. Formerly, our eyes were fixed on the temporary, decaying things of this world, but now we fix our eyes solely upon the eternal, incorruptible glory of God.

Dear disciples, seeking to please the Lord in all things—does this reflect our lives? Do we actively pursue God's glory in our daily lives? May we turn back to God, seeking the glory of our Father God with perseverance, honoring the Lord with our bodies, no longer pursuing the corruptible things of this world, but only worshiping the incorruptible Lord!

## **Future Meetings**

### **(1) May Discipleship Training (5/18-23)**

The speakers for the May Discipleship Training Camp are: Pastor David Wu, Pastor Benjamin Tam, and the CWC co-

workers. Pastor Wu holds a Master's degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Cincinnati and previously worked as a manager in an engineering company. Since 1991, he has served as the Senior Pastor of the Cincinnati Chinese Christian Church. Pastor Wu came from a Christian family, therefore, his experiences in the Bible and ministries are valuable examples for us. Although he retired from church ministry a few years ago, God has continued using him to lead Christian conferences around the world. Pastor Tam came to faith at a young age and was called to preach when he was twenty years old. He has faithfully served for forty-five years at the Chicago Chinese Baptist Church and the Northwest Suburban Chinese Baptist Church. He just retired from church ministry this year and is now able to travel around sharing the Word in various places.

The topics these two speakers will address from the Bible include: Romans (chapters 1-9 on the Christian Faith), chapter 12 on the Christian Living, the Essence of the Book of Joshua, How to Read the Gospel of John in Greek, the Development of Christian Character, and more.

Please reserve time in advance and encourage brothers and sisters to attend. Please also pray for this event, the speakers, and the co-workers involved. The registration form is available on CWC website. For more details and to register, [please click here](#). The deadline for registration is May 16th, so be sure to sign up soon.

## **(2) Memorial Weekend Lay-Minister Training (5/23-26)**

May Lay-Minister Training will be held during Memorial long weekend and is especially reserved for believers who are working full time. In addition to Pastor David Wu, Pastor Samuel Yang and Elder Albert Shyu will also be the speakers. Elder Shyu has been serving the church while working full time until retired last year. Pastor Yang has served in China's house churches for many years and has taught at seminary. He earned a Master of Divinity from Denver Seminary and a Master of Theology from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He previously served at the Chinese Baptist Church in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas, and pursued a Doctorate in Pastoral Theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary while training leaders of Chinese house churches. Currently, he serves at Preach the Whole Bible Ministry, providing leadership training for Chinese house church leaders via Zoom and his website, while also working as a freelance preacher in the U.S. Elder Albert Shyu became a Christian at a young age. He came to the U.S. in 1981 and earned master's degrees in both Mechanical Engineering and Computer Engineering. To further his ministry, he also obtained a Master's in Theological Studies while working. He has served at NASA and worked as a senior staff analysis engineer specializing in military vehicle's power and structural simulation analysis. He is currently an elder at the Christian Church in California- Sunnyvale.

The speakers will share not only messages aim on full-time workers, such as Balancing Work, Family, and Ministry; the Christian's Work Ethic, but also biblical and spiritual growth teachings. Topics include: Watch and Prepare for the Lord's Return (When the End Is Near, Secrets to Overcoming in the End Time, and Pleasing the Lord), and on ministry aspects such as the Often-overlooked Ministries, and messages on spiritual edification, etc. These teachings will help us building ourselves up with strong and solid materials, enabling us to stand firm in the last days, support weak brothers and sisters, and become pillars of strength in the church.

If you are working full-time, please don't miss this special training prepared just for you during the long weekend (so full-time participation is required). Please set aside the time early, and not only attend yourself but also encourage brothers and sisters in your church to come together. The registration form is now available on CWC website. For more details and to register, [please click here](#). The registration deadline is May 16.

## **(3) June Youth Camp (rescheduled to 6/1-7)**

Originally, we scheduled the Youth Camp from June 8 to 14. However, over the past month, many parents have shared with us that their children's spring semester ends before Memorial Day, and summer class will start on June 8, but their children are looking forward to attending the Youth Camp. After a month of survey and coordination with the speakers, we have officially decided to move the Youth Camp one week earlier.

The Youth Camp has always been eagerly anticipated by youths. But it is not just an ordinary recreational camp. It is a discipleship training camp that requires being born-again and full-time participation. This year's theme is "Peace in the Storm," based on Matthew 8:24-27. Life may have storms, but when Jesus is on our boat, we can have peace.

We have several familiar speakers this year, including Pastor Steve Tan, who currently serves at Immanuel Chinese Baptist Church in Overland Park, KS, and Pastor Berry Edwards, the senior pastor of Warsaw Cedar Grove Baptist Church (he was previously a math teacher at Warsaw High School and frequently teaches at the Youth Camp). Another speaker, Pastor Alex Lynch from Kansas City and now serves at Countryside Church responsible for Men's Ministries, College and Career

Ministries, and Small Group Ministries. Pastor Lynch became a Christian at a young age and grew up in the church. He has a deep love for God's Word and a passion for sharing biblical truth.

In addition to the activities that young people love, such as rafting, one afternoon will be dedicated to missionary trip at several nearby nursing homes. More details will be posted online soon. Parents, please begin encouraging your teenage children to sign up for this camp!

#### **(4) August Bible Camp (7/27 to 8/2)**

This time, we will be studying "The Pauline Epistles." If you are interested in learning, the syllabus and registration form are available on CWC website for you to download. The strict registration deadline is June 15th. Please register as early as possible and start preparing your assigned homework. [Click here for detailed information.](#)

#### **Holy Land Study Tour (Postponed to June, 2026)**

We have mentioned that CWC has organized Holy Land Study Tour every three years, and as scheduled, it could take place in 2025 (since the original 2022 tour was postponed to 2023) or in 2026. However, as of today, only about eighteen people have signed up, so we decided to postpone the Paul's Missionary Journey Study Tour until mid-June next year (after the Youth Camp ends in early June). If you are interested in participating, please make sure to reserve the time earlier and send us an email to let us know how many people will be participating.

#### **Sunday Evening Online Bible Study & Prayer Meeting**

Although the pandemic is over, the coworkers have decided to continue holding the online Bible study and prayer meeting on Sunday evenings, as it serves two purposes. First: it helps everyone begin preparing for the Bible camp in advance, so that when the deadline gets closer, you won't feel unprepared and want to give up. Of course, if you're not attending the Bible camp, you can still systematically study the Bible with us. Our coworkers will teach Bible study methods, how to do outlines, and how to write thematic reports, etc. This semester, we will be studying "The Pauline Epistles." The second 30 minutes is for everyone to pray in one heart for CWC ministry according to the center's monthly prayer calendar. Therefore, if you have burden to pray for CWC ministry, you can join the prayer meeting as well as study the Bible together. To avoid affecting brothers and sisters' work or school the next day, we have decided to shorten the meeting to one hour (7:00-8:00 PM Central Time). We will use Zoom, with the ID: 85888709271 and the password: 567482. We invite everyone to come and study the Bible together and pray for the center.

#### **New Online Donation**

Thank the Lord! Since April of last year, we have opened an account that accepts Zelle donations. Over the past year, we have seen the effectiveness of this account, especially during the center's meetings. Brothers and sisters who are willing to give can make full use of this method for donations. This will greatly save everyone the hassle of writing checks and mailing them, [click here for detailed operation.](#)

#### **Thanksgiving and Prayer Requests**

1. Thank the Lord for blessing the March Gospel Camp. Brothers and sisters were edified, and nonbelievers had the chance to hear the Gospel. All glory and praise be to the Lord.
2. Thank the Lord! After two months of searching, God has heard our prayers and made a way for the venue of our Winter Conference this year. The details will be announced in the next issue of the newsletter.
3. Continue to pray for the preparations of the May Discipleship Training, the May Lay-minister Training, the June Youth Camp, and the August Bible Camp, as well as for the brothers and sisters to prepare their hearts to participate.
4. For co-workers

--Mrs. Sylvia Ko: Thank the Lord for His sufficient grace that allowed me to participate in the service at the March Gospel Camp. It was a great encouragement to work alongside the short-term mission team and see the energy, effort, and time they dedicated for the sake of the Lord. It deeply inspired me to cherish what God has given us now and strive to do more for the Lord's work. Recently, I accidentally fell down, so please continue to pray for my physical balance and strength, trusting in the Lord to move forward.

--Sister Cindy Chiang: Thank the Lord! From early December last year until mid-March when the Gospel Camp ended,

life was very busy, but now it is finally returning to normal. In addition to the weekday office work and weekend campus ministry, I must also diligently prepare for this year's other meetings. I pray that the Lord will grant me heavenly wisdom and understanding, to make good use of each day's time, and that all my works may align with God's will.

--Pastor Qinglong Liang: Please pray that the Lord will grant me a humble heart to diligently serve at the Christian Witness Center and in the surrounding areas of Columbia. May He help me, along with my wife, to lead our three children in building a family that honors and glorifies God according to His will. Also ask the Lord to bestow a spirit of love and willingness, so that wherever I go, I may guide, accompany, and connect with people to help them become disciples of the Lord Jesus.

--Pastor Charles Huang: Please pray for the outreach ministry of the Champaign Chinese Christian Church, asking the Lord to grant wisdom laboring with church coworkers. A sister from Champaign Church was in a car accident, and her two-month-old daughter went to be with the Lord. She and her other two children were also injured. Please pray for healing and comfort for them. Additionally, please pray for Pastor Huang's parents in Taiwan, asking the Lord to soften their hearts so that they may be saved.

--American coworker Scott Jerome: Praise for Becci's shoulder doing better. Pray for our ministry within the youth group at church and also Scott's family is looking into care for his mom that has Alzheimer's.

5. Pray for the CWC monthly financial need (General fund, Building fund, Training fund, etc.) asking the Lord to manifest His abundant provision and allow more brothers and sisters to experience the blessings of giving.

6. For CWC: Pray that the Lord will bring more co-workers to the CWC ministry for the furtherance of the gospel ministry in the Midwest.

\*\*Thank you, brothers and sisters, for your donations. All receipts for 2024 (except for a few Zelle donations that did not include an ID or a valid address) have been sent out. If you have not received yours, it may have been returned to the center due to an incorrect address. Please contact the Center for assistance.

Emmanuel

In the Lord,

Sister Cindy Chiang