

The Singapore B-P Church Story

© 1995 Rev (Dr) Timothy Tow

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To
My Beloved Sister
Dr Tow Siew Ai
a lover
of the Bible-Presbyterian Church
and
Twentieth Century Reformation
this book
is affectionately dedicated



Grant Us Men Both Strong and Faithful

*By the pow'r of Truth unchanging
Working in the lives of men,
God did raise the B-P movement
From a humble little band.
By His grace He set a fire
Burning well within their hearts,
To dispel the clouds of darkness
Which had come unto these parts.
Through the years of change and challenge
Came the testings, not a few
When their faithfulness was threatened,
When they needed to be true!
But the Truth which God had given
They did steadfastly defend
'Gainst the waves of false religion
Which assailed on every hand.
Now the call has come upon them
To prepare the way ahead,
As to Moses came the Wisdom
To train Joshua as the head.
Who will keep the fires burning
When their strength has ebbed away?
Who will bear this awesome burden
In this great, momentous day?
Let the ones whom God has chosen
Be resolved to take the lead,
With their goal: to keep on doing
What their predecessors did!
Lord most gracious, most abundant,
Grant to us this prayer, we plead,
Grant us men both strong and faithful,
Men who will fulfil our need. Amen.*

Charles Seet

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FOREWORD

The story of the B-P Church, Singapore has to be told. It has been known to be the fastest growing church here. WHY? It is being told in this book—*The Singapore B-P Church Story*—by its founder pastor Dr Timothy Tow in a way that no one else can tell it. Dr Tow first related it to the students of the evening class of the Far Eastern Bible College, of which he is the Principal. His holy intention was that “they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

The Singapore B-P Church Story is a story of joy and tears, a story of spiritual conviction, courage, perseverance and God-given victories in the face of great odds. The author—Dr Timothy Tow—attempts at a comprehensive historical narration of the Singapore B-P Church. He first traces in a most interesting way, the origin of the B-P Church from its first root in the 16th Century Reformation to its seventh root in the Life B-P Church, Singapore. He concentrates on its vital American root and reveals the situation of the B-P Church in Singapore today.

The book is written in the author’s by now, well known, (Dr Tow having written many books) easy flowing, easy-to-read, yet spirit-moving and heart-inspiring style. Dr Tow has also, in the spirit and wisdom of letting them tell their own story, incorporated, to a large extent, the individual B-P Churches’ own accounts of their respective church growth and missionary expansion. He completes the book powerfully telling his readers clearly what he wants them to know. He wants them to be in no doubt what a B-P Church is and what it was founded for. He wants all to know that “it is the duty of all true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ to make a clear testimony of their faith in Him, especially in these darkening days of apostasy in many professing churches . . .”

Those who are curious to know about the dissolution of the B-P Synod will want to read this book. Members of B-P churches will find this book illuminating. The old BPs of the Prinsep Street era will treasure the record of their fond memories. Generally the book has interest for all in the Lord’s business.

Elder Chia Kim Chwee

PREFACE

The Singapore B-P Church Story is a one-hour credit course taught to students of the Far Eastern Bible College Evening Class. The notes given them, after further polishing, have now been put into more permanent print. This book is herewith presented to the Christian public, but more importantly, to B-P sons and daughters that they may know their roots.

The Singapore B-P Church began in 1950 as a separated Church and a strong constituent of the 20th Century Reformation movement (International Council of Christian Churches) vis-a-vis the Ecumenical Movement (World Council of Churches). As the Church grew and increased in numbers dissensions and deviations from the original position and precepts crept in. The result of it all was the dissolution of Synod in 1988. Nevertheless each individual Church whether big or small has continued to serve the Lord in their own way, like the Twelve Tribes of Israel after the Division of their Land (Josh 24), as the following pages will tell.

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (I Corinthians 10:13). So read on.

Timothy Tow



Frontispiece of booklet telling the story of English Presbyterian Mission to China, 1847-1913

Chapter I

THE B-P SINGAPORE TREE HAS SEVEN ROOTS

In telling the story of the Bible-Presbyterian (B-P) Church of Singapore the writer is reminded of an article he wrote for the 35th Anniversary Souvenir Programme titled, “The B-P Singapore Tree Has Seven Roots.” This article is more permanently recorded in *Vision*, the magazine of Life B-P Church, the mother church (1986-87).

From the parable of the mustard seed (not mushroom) which grew into a tree with outstretching branches, so that it gave shelter to the birds, we could visualise the many roots that succoured the tree. Hence, the title, “The B-P Singapore Tree Has Seven Roots.” For, without the roots, there would be no tree. And by corollary, the stronger and deeper the roots the sturdier and greener the tree and its branches. Here is the reproduction of the said article with amendments here and there to bring it up-to-date, and in keeping to the changing times.

The First Root

The Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore is first of all a Protestant Church. That brings us back immediately to the 16th Century Reformation when our spiritual forefathers broke the shackles of Rome to return to the apostolic faith; to the faith of an



John Calvin

open Bible, liberated from all erroneous and tyrannical traditions of a man-made system. Insofar as the Bible-Presbyterian Church is concerned, we trace our roots to that branch of Protestantism known as the Reformed Faith on the European continent, and as Presbyterianism in the British Isles.

John Calvin (1509-1564), a French theologian and pastor, was the leader of the Reformed Faith, so we have first of all a French

Root! The beauty and perfection of Reformed theology is seen *in Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion*, which is abridged for B-Ps in the first two of his four books (the remainder two to be published, God-willing, in the near future). Every B-P should more easily familiarise himself with Reformed theology by reading the Abridgement published by Far Eastern Bible College. (In "codified" form under English dress there is the Westminster Confession of Faith with its Larger and Shorter Catechisms [1643-46] which are the standards of the B-P Church as well as of many other Bible-believing Presbyterian Churches around the world). Nevertheless, it is the Bible, the infallible and inerrant Word of God, that is our supreme rule of faith and practice. Hence the name Bible-Presbyterian.

The Second Root

Our second root must necessarily be an English Root, since we have derived our Reformed Faith from the English Presbyterian Mission which sent her missionaries to our ancestors in South China. The special characteristic of the English

Presbyterians is their Non-conformist stance vis-a-vis the established Church, ie the Church of England with her bishops and Archbishop. Since our English forebears believed that the Church should be governed by elders or presbyters according to the Scriptures, and that the Episcopal system (rule by bishop) is a later development in Church history, they were not unwilling to pay the price of being expelled by the Act of Uniformity of 1662 whereby 2,000 English ministers lost their position and pension in the State Church for their Presbyterian Faith. The second English root makes us Presbyterians vis-a-vis the Anglican system.

The Third Root



William Chalmers Burns

In the course of years, however, the English Presbyterians became scattered and isolated, but a revival came in the early 1840s whereby the Presbyterian Church in England was revitalised and became reorganised as a community of the Protestant Faith independent of their earlier Scottish affiliation.

When the English Presbyterians found a new resurgence of faith in the eighteen-forties, they joined, though not too belatedly, other Protestant Churches in a new wave of foreign missions rising at the dawn of the 19th century. (William Carey, of the Baptists, *Father of Modern Missions*, arose in 1792.) It was not until 1847 that the English Presbyterians had found a first missionary to send to China. Nevertheless, he was not an Englishman but a Scotsman—Rev William Chalmers Burns, MA (1815-1868), a revivalist likened to George Whitefield, who is now named one of

five foremost pioneers in modern missions. So our third root is Scottish! He is also called “Grandfather of Bible-Presbyterians,” for it was William Chalmers Burns who in 1856 visited our Teochew ancestors with Hudson Taylor (founder of China Inland Mission 1865, now called Overseas Missionary Fellowship). While Taylor left for other fields, Burns stuck on in Swatow

(Santou) to found a Swatow Presbyterian Church. As for Amoy (Xiamen), he had an even more successful beginning in 1851, whereby a good many turned to the Lord and a stronger Hokkien Church was established.

The first convert in the Swatow field by the hand of George Smith, successor to William Burns, was in 1859. He was my maternal great-grandfather, Tan Khai Lin, a Manchu officer. He was the first to be ordained a minister of the Gospel in 1882.



Tan Khai Lin

Some of our Teochew and Hokkien ancestors, converted to Christianity through the Reformed Faith, began to migrate to Singapore and the Malay States in the eighteen-sixties and seventies. They came in unwieldy Chinese junks by the monsoon of the South China Sea to eke out a better livelihood under British rule. One of the earliest migrants insofar as the Swatow field was concerned, was Elder Heng Chiang Mong (1856-1931), father of Elder Heng Mui Kiah and grandfather of Dr Andrew Heng and Rev Philip Heng, pastor of Galilee B-P Church.

In order to consolidate the faith of these emigrants to Singapore and Malaya, the English Presbyterian Mission sent Rev



Heng Chiang Mong

John A B Cook to Singapore in 1881 after a year's language study in Swatow. Rev Cook organised them into four churches, one of which was Life Church, Prinsep Street (1883). It is primarily from this Teochew-speaking Church (生命堂 *Say Mia Tng*) that our whole B-P Movement has sprung. Another interesting fact is that Rev Cook established the E P Mission House at Gilstead Road on a hillock, across the side road from Life B-P Church. The site of the Mission House is dominated today by a seven-storey condominium. The writer had

personally visited the E P Mission House when a boy with his pastor grandfather, who came monthly to Gilstead Road to collect his stipend from the Resident Missionary in the late nineteen twenties. My grandfather was pastor of the E P Mission Church at 4¾ miles Upper Serangoon Road (1927-37). Today it is known as Bethel Presbyterian Church.

The Fourth Root

Though the English Presbyterians were the first to establish a long-lasting work in the Swatow and Amoy regions, there was one fishing village called Iam Tsau, 25 miles from Swatow, that was evangelised earlier by Dr Rudolph Lechler of the Basel Missionary Society, Switzerland (founded 1815). Dr Lechler, a German, persisted in planting a church at Iam Tsau (1848-1852), although he was banished from his Iam Tsau station at the behest of changing Prefects. Nevertheless, he was able to baptise 13



Iam Tsau Church (1848 – 1995)

believers from whom a church was established. The Tow and Lim (Joshua) clans have descended directly from this remote Teochew village church so that, as a matter of fact, our B-P Church has also a little German Root!

Years later, Rev Tan Khai Lin (alias Soo Chuan) my maternal great grandfather, became superintendent pastor of Iam Tsau alongside three other churches. What Lechler planted, William Burns and Tan Khai Lin watered, but God gave the increase (1 Corinthians 3:7) “And herein is the saying true, one soweth and another reapeth . . .” (John 4:37).

In January 1995 a new five-storey “cathedral” was erected over the site of the old church, built mostly by funds remitted by Iam Tsau sons and daughters overseas. Indeed, the little mustard seed sown by Lechler has become a mighty tree a century and a half after. “For who hath despised the day of small things?” (Zechariah 4:10).

Dr Lechler moved inland to work with the Hakkas four years before William Chalmers Burns’ arrival in Swatow. In Hakkaland

he founded what has become known as the Basel Church (巴色会). Emigrants of the Basel Church to Southeast Asia found a new home in Sabah (British North Borneo), so if you visit Sabah today you will find a strong Hakka Church named after Basel! The Basel Church is now affiliated with the Lutheran Church.

The Fifth Root



Dr John Sung

Reviewing the history of our forefathers who emigrated to Singapore in the eighteen-sixties and seventies, so that the Teochews and Hokkiens, as stated earlier, were organised into four congregations worshipping at Bukit Timah (1881), Prinsep Street (1883), at Tanjong Pagar (1883), as well as at Upper Serangoon (1883), we come now to the generation of their grandchildren in the 1930s.

In 1935 Singapore was visited (August-September) and revisited (October) with a Pentecost whereby 2,000 nominal Christians were soundly converted through the ministry of Dr John Sung (宋尚节), PhD, a mighty revivalist God had raised for China and Southeast Asia. Under his ministry the founding fathers of the B-P Church of Singapore were not only saved but also called to full-time service. From Dr John Sung our founding fathers were first introduced to the doctrine of the Premillennial Return of Christ, and alerted against the social gospel of the liberals and modernists, the evangelist himself having tasted the poisonous leaven thereof at Union Seminary, New York City, and delivered

from its deadly brew. From Dr John Sung the founding fathers of our B-P Church are fired with a zeal for evangelism, and have set the pace for the extension of God's Kingdom through the B-P Church movement to this day. In Dr John Sung we have a Chinese Root.

The Sixth Root

When Timothy Tow Siang Hui the founding pastor of the B-P Church was called to prepare himself for his life's calling, he first learned under Dr Chia Yu Ming, doyen Presbyterian theologian of China in Nanking, and Dr A B Dodd, missionary to China of the Independent Board for Foreign Missions. After a year in China, he was introduced by Miss Grace Jephson of the China Inland Mission to Faith Theological Seminary, USA. Being an independent Seminary, nevertheless established by leaders of the Bible Presbyterian Church, USA (Reformed and Premillennial) in the old Princeton tradition, its other more outstanding distinctive was its separatist position vis-a-vis the rising Ecumenical Movement under liberal and modernist leadership.



Dr Carl McIntire

Dr Carl McIntire, president of the Seminary Board and a founding father of the Bible Presbyterian Church, USA, was particularly articulate in speaking against Protestantism's sliding back to Rome. So, he sounded a clarion call for a 20th Century Reformation, which became organised as the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) in Amsterdam 1948. The same year the Ecumenical Movement was established in the

same City as the World Council of Churches. (Note that the WCC is not Christian!) Today the WCC has not only moved closer to Rome but also to the main human religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, and Islam. When the WCC met at their Third Assembly in South America, February 1995, they voted to dialogue with the non-Christian religions in the Latin Lands (McIntire).

When the challenge to join the 20th Century Reformation was given by Dr McIntire to Faith Seminary students, the founding pastor of the B-P Church, Singapore, Timothy Tow, then a junior, felt God's call to join the movement. Fired with a crusading zeal to defend the Faith, he wrote Elder Quek Kiok Chiang, then of the Teochew-speaking mother church (Say Mia Tng) at Prinsep Street to join the ICCC. Like David and Jonathan, the two leaders of this B-P Church in embryo began to impart the spirit of the 20th Century Reformation to the congregation that gathered after them. Thus, in our Stand for the Faith, we can trace to Dr Carl McIntire, leader of the Bible Presbyterians and president of the ICCC, who must be acknowledged our American Root.

The Seventh Root

With Timothy Tow's graduation from Faith Seminary in May 1950, he was requested by the mother Life Church to inaugurate an English Service. This was October 20, 1950. As our little Church grew with the blessings of God, there are now (1995) well over fifty congregations in Singapore and double the number spread out in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, China, Saipan, Australia, Burma, India, Pakistan, Kenya, Ivory Coast, USA, England, Canada, etc. We have other founding members rising to bear the torch of the separatist stand and of the 20th Century Reformation movement. One who took a firm stand with us from the beginning to this day, but is migrated to the United States, is Rev Silas C T Hsu. A younger member who has arisen

since the coming of Dr Billy Graham, foremost ecumenical evangelist, to Singapore in 1978 is Dr Tow Siang Hwa. Seeing through the deadly leaven of neo-evangelical “cooperative” evangelism and neo-evangelical “scholarship,” Dr Tow has added his voice to the older founding fathers by publishing the B-P Banner, for many years the official organ of the B-P Church of Singapore. For speaking fearlessly against error in high places in Christendom the renewal of its publishing licence was refused on December 27, 1994.

Though our founding fathers belong to the migrant generation, having come to make their home in Singapore in the 1920s and 30s, they are nevertheless citizens of a new Singapore, like sons of the soil, having been domiciled here almost all their life. They may be called a “bridge” generation, with cultural roots plucked up from the Chinese mainland, but are now firmly transplanted here. They are loyal and patriotic citizens of the new Singapore (independent from British rule since 1965), but even more fervent in the service of God’s Kingdom worldwide. These are our Singapore Roots.

By way of recapitulation, the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore has seven roots. They are French, English, Scottish, German, Chinese, American and Singaporean. Of these seven roots, it is the American root that we must study in detail, for this is the root that produces the Bible-Presbyterian in us. We were descendants of the English Presbyterian Mission, and we were Singapore-Chinese Presbyterians. How we became Bible-Presbyterians is a glowing yet sombre story that must be told.

Chapter II

TRACING THE AMERICAN ROOT— From Events that Led to Separation from the Presbyterian Church, USA

The rise of the Bible Presbyterian Church, USA, our American root, may be traced to the first outbreak of blatant unbelief in the great Presbyterian Church in the USA. Dr Charles A Briggs, professor of Biblical Theology at Union Seminary, New York (where Dr John Sung later tasted the poisonous leaven of modernist teaching in 1926), was the first renegade against the Church by attacking the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible. He was brought to trial in 1891-93 and found guilty by the General Assembly. Whereupon Union Seminary in New York City withdrew from Presbyterian jurisdiction, declared itself independent and retained the liberal Dr Briggs as professor. Graduates of Union Seminary, this hotbed of modernism, now infiltrated the Presbyterian Church, sowing seeds of further rebellion from the old-fashioned faith. “Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein” (Jeremiah 6:16).

To safeguard the Church from inroads of modernistic unbelief, the General Assembly in 1910 declared five

fundamentals of the Church which must be subscribed by ministerial candidates: They are:

1. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and our standards that the Holy Spirit did so inspire, guide and move the writers of Holy Scripture as to keep them from error.
2. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and our standards that our Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.
3. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and our standards that Christ offered up Himself a sacrifice to satisfy Divine justice and to reconcile us to God.
4. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God and of our standards concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, that on the third day He rose again from the dead with the same body with which He suffered, with which also He ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of His Father, making intercession.
5. It is an essential doctrine of the Word of God as the supreme standard of our faith that our Lord Jesus Christ showed His power and love by working mighty miracles. This working was not contrary to nature, but superior to it.

The Assembly emphasised, “These five articles are essential and necessary. Others are equally so.” This supposedly closed all loopholes to would-be modernist infiltrators.

From 1910 to 1916 the fundamentalist-modernist controversy within the Presbyterian Church, USA raged back and forth. In spite of the declarations of the General Assembly, Union Seminary continued to be a source of insidious modernist undermining of the Church and contamination of other seminaries. In 1918 the Presbyterian Church, USA was further attacked by Dr Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878-1969), a liberal



Dr Harry Emerson Fosdick

Baptist who became assistant minister of the First Presbyterian Church of New York City.

In 1922 Dr Fosdick preached a sermon, “Shall the Fundamentalists win?” This sermon brought on a greater crisis in the Presbyterian Church. To guard the Church from this latest attack on the old faith, the General Assembly in 1923 reaffirmed the famous “five points of fundamentalism, ie the infallibility and inerrancy of Holy Scripture, the Virgin Birth of Christ, His vicarious (substitutionary)

atonement, His bodily resurrection and His miracles,” were essential to the Christian Faith, but the modernist clerical minority opposed the harder. The battle rages on.

The modernists hit back by what is known as the Auburn Affirmation 1924 (because this was framed in Auburn, New York) at which 1,293 ministers of the Presbyterian Church, USA, denying the five fundamentals of faith as essentials, dismissed them as theories. When the General Assembly which met the same year did not take action against the young Turks of modernism, the battle for the faith in the Church was all but lost. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump when it is left unpurged (I Corinthians 5:6,7). We would rightly call the Auburn Affirmation the Auburn Defamation.

In retracing our steps to the first sowing of modernist leaven in the Presbyterian Church through Union Seminary, let us witness a case in point from our biography of *John Sung My Teacher*. There is one chapter that is titled “A Cemetery whose

President was a Coffin” that describes the extent of damage modernist teachings had done to a soul.

The autumn of 1926 saw Dr Sung Shang Chieh, BA, MSc, PhD enrolled at Union Theological Seminary, New York City. It had a newly installed president Dr Henry Sloane Coffin by name. In after years Dr Sung made a humorous word-play of this situation in one of his sermons, “I was enrolled in a seminary that taught a ‘God-is-dead’ theology, under the caretaking of a principal surnamed Coffin. But this seminary became a cemetery to my troubled soul.” A hotbed of rankest modernistic and liberal theology it boasted amongst its professors Dr Harry Emerson Fosdick, world-renowned orator and pastor, later on of New York’s famed Riverside Church. (Interestingly, the senior pastor of Riverside Church today [1985] is William Sloane Coffin the son of Henry Sloane Coffin . . . The Junior Coffin receives homosexuals and lesbians into the Church and sanctions their election to high office).

If it is asked what is the theology of the world-renowned Harry Emerson Fosdick, another sermon he preached, “The Peril of Worshipping Jesus”, shows his cloven hoof. In denying the Lord who bought him (II Peter 2:1) he is on the side of the Auburn Affirmationists. His book, *The Modern Use of the Bible*, spread its false teachings throughout America. He attacked the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement as a “slaughter house religion.”

Fosdick was a devotee of the “social gospel” which originated from Germany in the teachings of Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889). This “social gospel,” he says, is proclaimed by none other than Jesus himself. It is “the universal fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man.” The task of the Church is to preach the “social gospel” through social reform and political action. In more modern terms it is the “liberation theology” that comes from Roman Catholic South America in the late sixties

which seeks to interpret the Christian faith from the perspective of the poor and the oppressed. This is the “social gospel” Dr John Sung warned against, for it is not the spiritual emphasis of the salvation of the soul but rather the economic salvation of the body. Many “social gospellers” turned to Communism or Socialism as the “Christian” solution to economic ills and social problems.

According to the modernist theology, man is the highest product of evolution. Man is not totally depraved as the Bible reveals but naturally good. Jesus Christ is divine not that He is God but because He lived closer to God than the rest of mankind. Salvation, says the modernist preacher, is imitating His life and following His ethical teachings, so as to establish a perfect social order. Modernist pundits were persuaded the old-fashioned belief in the Bible would soon pass away. That was why Fosdick in 1922 castigated the old-time believers with the sermon, “Shall the Fundamentalists win?”

J Gresham Machen the Man

Since the independent Presbyterian Union Seminary had totally capitulated to modernism, the attack on Princeton the last bastion of faith began in earnest, the same time when John Sung enrolled at Union in 1926. “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19). The standard whom the Lord now lifted up was Dr J Gresham Machen.

All the Synods and Assemblies of the Church, all the Boards and Directors of the theological institutions, were unwieldy trappings if not sitting ducks to the modernist onslaughts. In the history of salvation, God has not used councils and committees, but always a man (Isaiah 59:16) to accomplish His purpose. God’s man in the 16th Century when the Church was at its darkest was Martin Luther. God’s man in the early part of the 20th Century

was Machen, when Christianity's strongholds in the Presbyterian Church in USA were taken by Satan one after the other until there was only one Princeton left. How God had been preparing this man of the hour to stand in the gap (Ezekiel 22:30) is a story that must be retold.

Dr J Gresham Machen was born of godly parents in Baltimore Maryland, 1881. He received his AB degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1901, and BD (now MDiv) from Princeton Theological Seminary, 1905. He was honoured with the DD by Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia, 1921, and the LittD by Wheaton 1928.

His call to study for the ministry was a gradual one that led him to Princeton. Upon graduation from Princeton he spent a year in Germany to round up his education. It was there that he tasted the bitterness of German unbelief and subtle attacks on the Christian Faith through the Ritschlian philosophy. He vowed to

fight this poisonous leaven then beginning to infiltrate the American Church. In 1906 he joined his alma mater on the teaching staff in the New Testament Department which position he held until 1929.



Dr J Gresham Machen

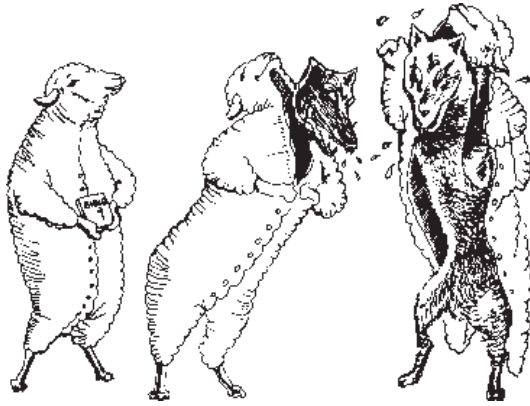
Though he wrote a Greek grammar he was not confined to the ivory tower of a theological professor. He entered vigorously the arena of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy of his day. He wrote four classics, the *Origin of Paul's Religion*, the *Virgin Birth of Christ*, *Christianity and Liberalism* and *What is Faith*, all

in the defence of the old faith. “No one has ever surpassed and very few, if any, have equalled the brilliant defence of the Scriptures that Dr Machen produced. Because of his scholarship, his monumental works, his directness, his simplicity, his sincerity, no man could gainsay him.” A famous saying of his is, “There is no such thing as presenting truth without attacking error.” This is Machen’s martial spirit echoing Jude 3, “. . . that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

Above all Machen loved the Bible. He learned its content largely from his beloved mother, like young Timothy, that from a child he had known the Scriptures which had made him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ. He knew his Bible not a verse here and a section there that entranced him. Instead he found in it what his forefathers had found, a system of truth to which he could give his allegiance as a whole.

“In mature life Machen often paid tribute to the instruction in the Bible that he received at his mother’s knee. At twelve years of age his knowledge of its contents, including the names and character of all the kings of Israel and Judah, he later observed, surpassed that of the average theological student of his day. There was moreover careful instruction in the Westminster Shorter Catechism and a commitment to memory of questions and answers” (*J Gresham Machen* by Ned B Stonehouse, 40).

Dr Machen was brought to the forefront of battle for the faith in 1920 when for the first time he attended the General Assembly as a commissioner. “The significance of this was that from 1920, the beginning of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, the issues of Church union, the reorganization of Princeton Seminary and modernism in the Foreign Board—all doctrinal issues—were inextricably bound together.”



Wolf in sheep's clothing

According to Dr Machen, liberalism is not Christianity, but another religion. It has no place in the Church of Jesus Christ at all. This is his thesis in *Christianity and Liberalism*. In more vivid language, liberalism is a wolf in sheep's clothing in the fold of Christianity. The spirit of Machen in contrast with the spirit of Harry Emerson Fosdick, is revealed in two letters he wrote his mother in 1915 on Billy Sunday, whom I would call the "John Sung of America." Machen said,

On Wednesday afternoon I went to Philadelphia to get some type-written copy, and seized the opportunity of staying over night and hearing Billy Sunday. Two meetings are held daily except Monday and three on Sunday. The attendance at every meeting is about 20,000. Since I had not had time to get a ticket entitling me to a seat with the ministers, I was advised to go at about five o'clock in order to get a seat for the half-past seven meeting. At five o'clock there were great crowds of people standing around the doors of the Tabernacle. After standing about an hour in the rain I learned from a policeman that the public was to be admitted only if, at a quarter past seven, places were left over after certain delegations had been accommodated. Fortunately the night was terrifically rainy, so that when I

returned after seven I was able to get into the building. I stood up at one of the back corners, at such a vast distance from the platform that I could scarcely make out the features of the speaker. Most of the sermon, however, I could hear, though I missed the “asides,” and was too much out of things to get any proper impression of the meeting. After the main meeting was over I pushed my way up towards the center of the building, and listened to the enormous choir and afterwards to the discussion of methods before the hundreds of workers on the platform. This last part impressed me as much as anything else. Those people are in dead earnest—it is a great movement for the highest possible end. As I say, I had no proper opportunity to judge Billy Sunday himself—standing as I was in a sort of passage way, and looking through a lattice work, I felt so detached from the crowd as to be a spectator rather than a participant. . . .

Machen’s letter home a week later tells of attendance at another Billy Sunday meeting in which he had the opportunity of making more satisfactory observations and judgments:

I took another look at Billy Sunday last Friday night, utilizing a trip to the Board of Publication in this incidental way. This time, on Bobby’s advice, I applied for a ticket and had a far better place to hear and see than in my first visit. I was very greatly impressed—far more so than on the other occasion. The text was II Sam. 12:13: “And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord hath also put away thy sin.” The sermon was old-fashioned evangelism of the most powerful and elemental kind. Much of it, I confess, left me cold—I “took” some of the touches of humor and did not “think that they were mine.” But the total impact of the sermon was great. At the climax, the preacher got up on his chair—and if he had used a step-ladder, nobody could have thought the thing excessive, so dead in earnest were both speaker and audience! The climax was the boundlessness of

God's mercy; and so truly had the sinfulness of sin been presented, that everybody present with any heart at all ought to have felt mighty glad that God's mercy *is* boundless. In the last five or ten minutes of that sermon, I got a new realization of the power of the gospel. . . .

Insofar as Princeton Seminary is concerned Dr Machen had tried to save it from modernist encroachment by the pen. He prepared a full statement in a 48-page printed booklet entitled, *The Attack Upon Princeton Seminary, a Plea for Fair Play*, and circulated 20,000 copies at his own expense. He gave vigorous support to *The Presbyterian*, official organ of Princeton Seminary. Through the magazine, Princeton was preserved for three years, 1926-28.

When the General Assembly voted in 1929 to reorganise Princeton in the interests of liberalism and placed it in the hands of a Board acceptable to the Auburn Affirmationists, those who attacked the Five Fundamentals of the Faith, the battle so



Princeton Seminary



Dr Allan A MacRae

vigorously fought by Machen for his alma mater was lost. Princeton is fallen, is fallen. In such a tragic situation the only course Machen could take was separation.

In June 1929 Dr Machen with four loyal professors left Princeton and founded Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Dr Robert Dick Wilson and Dr Allan A MacRae his successor were two of them. Twenty-nine young men of the upper classes of Princeton left, among whom was Carl McIntire. Dr Machen led Westminster Seminary faithfully until his death

on January 1, 1937. Graduates from Westminster Seminary were naturally rejected by Churches now in control of the modernists.

Chapter III

SEPARATION FROM UNBELIEF— leads to formation of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions

The struggle for the faith raged in the Church, in the seminaries, and logically also in the Missions. Hitherto only Bible-believing missionaries were sent to the fields. Now, a rising number of modernists were also sent, tares sown among the wheat. By 1932 the Foreign Missions Board of the Presbyterian Church, USA, had practically fallen into the hands of the Auburn Affirmationists, the modernists and liberals. One thousand students preparing for foreign missionary service were required to read books by modernist authors, such as Harry Emerson Fosdick. As the modernists took over the helm of Foreign Missions no voice of dissent was heard, until J Gresham Machen spoke again.

In 1933 Dr Machen introduced an overture to the Assembly to elect to positions on the Board of Foreign Missions only those who upheld the Word of God in its infallibility and inerrancy, the standards of the Church including the five fundamentals declared essential to Christianity in the Assembly of 1923. This overture was supported by a 110-page book, *Modernism and The Board of Foreign Missions*. In spite of the documentation of modernistic unbelief entering the foreign fields through an increasing number of liberal missionaries, one of whom was Pearl S Buck, author of

many books, Dr Machen was put down by the Church, now in the hands of the enemy. (Mrs Buck, an agnostic, was reported as saying that “she believes in Christ whether He actually lived or not.” Nor did she believe in the damnation of the heathens who die without personal confession of faith in Christ. Yet she was benignly tolerated in the highest echelons of ecclesiastical power). This led to Machen’s break with the Foreign Missions Board to start an Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. “In view of the action of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA resisting the movement for reform of the Board of Foreign Missions, a new Board will be organised by Bible-believing Christians to promote truly Biblical and truly Presbyterian work.” These words of righteous defiance announced at the close of the General Assembly heralded the formation of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.

The new Board was constituted to provide an agency to which missionary-minded Christians holding to the Reformed Faith could contribute their substance and be assured that this would go to the support of preaching of the pure Gospel. It was the first determined effort in Presbyterian circles to resist the avalanche of modern unbelief descending upon Presbyterian missions. Independent of control by the Presbyterian Church this wise action was a genius from the Lord. On June 27, 1933 the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions was born. Its headquarters were established in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the City of Brotherly Love, which remains to this day. So is Dr Carl McIntire its long-remaining vice-president.

Immediately, the constitutionality of the new Board was challenged by the General Council of the Presbyterian Church in the USA. It declared it was impossible for any independent agency or board to carry on missionary operations within the Presbyterian Church.



The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions

The Independent Board was charged with diverting funds from the official Board of the General Assembly. As a matter of fact it received funds which never would have reached the official Board. The Independent Board made no appeal for funds, but relied entirely in faith upon the support of Christians sympathetic to its cause.

Action by mandate was taken to dissolve the Independent Board by the highest authorities of the Church, but Dr Machen and his associates rebutted that the Mandate of the General Assembly was neither in accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the USA nor with the Word of God. "To obey the so called 'mandate' of the 1934 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA would be equivalent to obeying men rather than God (Acts 4:19). It would be obeying human councils acting contrary to the Bible." This reply by members of the Independent Board was based on Section 7 of Chapter I of the "Form of Government" which states: "That all Church power, whether exercised by the body in general or in the way of representation by delegated authority, is only ministerial and

declarative, this is to say, that the Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners, that no Church judicatory ought to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of their own authority, and that all their decisions should be founded upon the revealed will of God.”

The men on the Independent Board refused to disband. Ecclesiastical persecution followed. They were brought to trial. Without going into the details, suffice it to mention the case against Machen and upon his disciple and student Carl McIntire.

A Judicial Commission of seven men tried Machen and found him guilty of disobedience to the order of the General Assembly. It was an “amazing trial” in an atmosphere of complete tyranny. He appealed to the Synod but as expected it was dismissed. The year was 1935.

The Mantle of Machen Falls on McIntire

By this time, Carl McIntire, who left Princeton to finish his study in Westminster under Machen, had graduated. He became pastor of Collingswood Presbyterian Church in 1933. In 1934 when McIntire was only 27 years of age, he was invited to sit on the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. For refusing to resign from that Board, charges of “not being zealous and faithful in maintaining the peace of the Church and violation of ordination vows” were brought against him. He was suspended from the ministry and the Communion of the Church, or in more vivid language, “defrocked.” Though he appealed, his appeal was dismissed, and though the “high priests” of Presbyterian ecclesiastical powers had “defrocked” McIntire, the mantle of Machen would soon be seen to fall upon him! He was Machen’s Elisha.

With the unfair judicial action taken against Machen and McIntire, separation from the old Church was inevitable. June

1936 saw the formation under Machen of the Presbyterian Church of America. As this name rivalled that of the parent body, Presbyterian Church in USA, legal action was taken which compelled it to be changed to Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Now, the leadership in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and Westminster Seminary being amillennial and holding the position of Christian liberty in matters of smoking and drinking, it found opposition from those who were premillennial and held to the separated life. The two issues resulted in a group withdrawing from the infant Orthodox Presbyterian Church to form the Bible Presbyterian Church, and from Westminster to establish Faith Seminary, taking with them the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. When Dr J Gresham Machen was called home January 1, 1937 the struggle for the Faith fell upon Carl McIntire, leader of the newly formed Bible Presbyterians and President of Faith Theological Seminary. In Chinese eyes, Machen was like Sun Yat Sen (Father of the Chinese Republic), and McIntire like Chiang Kai-shek, Sun's disciple and successor. To the Bible-Presbyterians of Singapore, McIntire is our American Root.

Chapter IV

WHAT IS BIBLE PRESBYTERIANISM?

The essence of Bible Presbyterianism is given in a write-up in *The Christian Beacon*, August 31, 1939, under the caption, “Bible Presbyterian Synod Founded.”

Bible Presbyterian Synod Founded

On the evening of June 4, 1937, a small but prayerful group of men met in one of the assembly rooms of the St James Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. After much waiting on the Lord and earnest conference together, those present formed themselves into “The Bible Presbyterian Synod.”

At this meeting there was drawn up a document entitled, “Articles of Association of the Bible Presbyterian Fellowship,” which was signed by those present and, within a short time, by a few others. The “Articles of Association” are as follows:

For the sake of fellowship in the principles for which we stand, and as a testimony to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and because of the official apostasy of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, and because of the departure of the Presbyterian Church of America from the historic position of American Presbyterianism, we, a group of ministers and ruling elders, do associate ourselves together in the Bible Presbyterian Synod.

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We reaffirm our faith in the system of doctrine set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms in the form in which they stood in the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the USA in May, 1936. We propose to amend these standards in any particular in which the premillennial teaching of the Scriptures may be held to be obscured. We reaffirm our belief in the fundamental principles of Presbyterian Church polity.

We appoint as a convening committee for the next meeting of the Bible Presbyterian Synod the ministers in the Philadelphia area who are signers of this document, and this committee shall have power to represent and act for us, ad interim, in ecclesiastical matters, such as the receiving and organising of presbyteries connected with the Synod, the receiving and disbursing of funds, and other related matters, with the provision that their acts in this capacity shall be subject to review at our next Synod.

We heartily reaffirm our faith in and support of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, and join in the vigorous testimony of that Board against modernism and unbelief of all kinds.

We are persuaded that the great battle in the world today is the faith of our fathers versus modernism, compromise, indifferentism, and worldliness. With all our hearts we throw our strength into the great task of winning lost souls to Jesus Christ by the Gospel of the Grace of God.

Those who framed these articles had been ministers of the Presbyterian Church in the USA who had withdrawn from that body, and elders who were in a like position. They had also been members of the body then known as “The Presbyterian Church of America,” now called “The

Orthodox Presbyterian Church.” They had withdrawn from the Presbyterian Church in the USA because of its official apostasy and the recognition of their duty not to remain in fellowship with a church dominated by unbelief. They had entered the then Presbyterian Church of America in the hope that it would carry on the true spiritual succession of American Presbyterianism.

This latter hope, those who formed the Bible Presbyterian Church felt, had been frustrated by tendencies within the then Presbyterian Church of America which found more or less clear expression, both in official and nonofficial actions, at the Third General Assembly of that body held from June 1 through 4, 1937. Without impugning the sincerity of those who dominated the then Presbyterian Church of America, it was felt by many that, due to a peculiar combination of circumstances, there was no possibility that that body would ever become a widespread or effective witness to the great spiritual succession of American Presbyterianism. It seemed to them that the body was dominated by a small clique who were determined to control it totally. This group represented, doubtless in all sincerity, a point of view concerning the return of our Lord and concerning the use of intoxicating liquors which it was felt by many was both contrary to the Word of God and calculated to prevent that church from ever awakening a wide response in the hearts of American Christians. So, for the sake not only of the principles at stake, but also with a view to the need for the establishment of a great nationwide witness to the Word of God, there were many who believed that the then “Presbyterian Church of America” as it had existed up until that time represented a “false start.”

In order to accomplish the result originally intended, to which they had been bound by most solemn promises and by their loyalty to the truth of God, they felt required to unite themselves in a testimony which would be Scriptural and which further would not offend the consciences of

American Christians by viewing with approval practices which the Holy Spirit had led American churches in the past emphatically to reject. The men who had worked together until that time in the then Presbyterian Church of America parted from their brethren who felt differently, not in anger, but in the profound conviction that they could not remain in that fellowship and expect the full blessing of God upon their labors.

The founders of the Bible Presbyterian Synod blew no trumpets and beat no drums. They desired only God's providential leading and to lay the foundation for His work in the future with a prayerful dependence upon His grace. Without much to go on in the way of material resources, quiet groundwork was laid between June, 1937, and September, 1938, when the Bible Presbyterian Synod met in the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, New Jersey. There, after thorough consideration and much prayer, the Synod adopted a Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechism, a Form of Government, and provisionally, a Book of Discipline. Concurrently, the Synod resolved itself into "The First General Synod" of the Bible Presbyterian Church. It erected presbyteries and took other steps for the promotion of the cause of the Gospel as God should send the means.

(The Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechism, Form of Government and Book of Discipline of the Bible Presbsyterian Church, USA was adopted by the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore since the day of its inception, though it has its own constitution adapted to certain requirements of the Singapore Government).

Faith Theological Seminary

One inevitable development from the Bible Presbyterian Church is Faith Theological Seminary (FTS). In the same year that the BP Church was founded came into being a Seminary that would train ministers for the new denomination. The reason for the opening of FTS is given succinctly in “A Brief History of the Bible Presbyterian Church (and its agencies)” as follows:

The founders of the Bible Presbyterian Church realised that the principal source of the apostasy of many old-line denominations was the defection of theological seminaries. In the summer of 1937, men of God, led by Dr Carl McIntire, formed a new seminary which should be honoring to the Lord in its doctrine and position—a witness to the faith once for all delivered to the saints, ever exalting the infallible Word of God as the only rule of faith and practice. God gave these men Faith, and classes began that fall with twenty-six students, all of whom were college graduates. Thus was founded Faith Theological Seminary, an institution which seeks to combine the highest scholarship with constant emphasis on vital spiritual life.

In 1953, when the Seminary found it necessary to expand its facilities, God made it possible for the famous Widener Estate, 920 Spring Avenue, Elkins Park, on the northern outskirts of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to become the home of Faith Theological Seminary. The buildings and grounds are ideally suited for the needs of a theological seminary.

Under the leadership of Dr Allan A MacRae, recognised Old Testament scholar, and a consecrated faculty, students at Faith receive personal attention, as they are taught the Word of God and as they carefully examine critical views of the Scriptures—“that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”



Faith Theological Seminary

Faith Theological Seminary is independent and not under the ecclesiastical control of any denomination. It presents the great system of doctrine set forth in the historic Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. It is closely identified with the American Council of Christian Churches and the world-wide testimony of the International Council of Christian Churches.

In the ups and downs of the Bible Presbyterian Church movement which have affected the fortunes of Faith Seminary, a number of professors seceded from the alma mater to form Covenant Theological Seminary in St Louis, Missouri, 1956. In 1971, Dr Allan A MacRae left to form Biblical Theological Seminary at Hatfield, Pennsylvania. A third seminary, the Western Reformed, was established under the leadership of Dr John Battle at Tacoma, Washington State, 1983.

In true succession to Faith Theological Seminary is the founding of Far Eastern Bible College, Singapore, in 1962. With



Far Eastern Bible College and Life B-P Church

an enrolment of 85 students today, it is also the hub of a Bible College movement that has spread to Burma, Philippines, Indonesia and Africa.

McIntire's 95 "Theses"

In a book of quotations from Dr McIntire's ministry titled "Freedom is My Business" compiled on the occasion of his 50th anniversary in the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, New Jersey, October 1, 1933 to October 2, 1983, there are found the following statements on the Bible Presbyterian Church vis-a-vis the apostasy from which it separated. Every sentence is a statement of its own and culled selectively from Dr McIntire's vast extent of writings—books, articles, pamphlets, manifestoes, etc. Like Luther's, nailed to the door of the castle Church at Wittenburg, these statements may be called Dr McIntire's theses on the Bible Presbyterian Church and related church issues. These are gems of truth for our learning and keeping today if like-

minded B-P Churches desire to be linked to that great church movement begun by the Bible Presbyterians USA in the thirties.

1. God, in His blessed providence, has brought to a special place of testimony and usefulness the Bible Presbyterian Church.
2. The Bible Presbyterian Church stands in the line of succession of the great witness of Presbyterianism in America.
3. When our church was formed in 1937, the word “Bible” was placed in front of the name “Presbyterian” because the great fundamentalist-modernist controversy had centred around the Bible.
4. Controversy is nothing to be ashamed of when it is in the holy cause of righteousness and of faith.
5. The church is not a forum where many opinions and varying views are presented; it is a pulpit from which only one Christ is heralded.
6. Distinctions which give birth to the various branches of the visible church are valid and cannot be minimised, for they are based upon the solid conviction that there is such a thing as truth and that it is the duty of God’s people to search it out.
7. The greatest need in the Christian Church today is for the right kind of preachers.
8. The Bible Presbyterian Church is a militant church in the defense of the faith.
9. The Bible Presbyterian Church is a Bible preaching and evangelistic church.

10. The Bible Presbyterian Church is a confessional church. It accepts the historic Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.
11. We are in the midst of a twentieth century reformation which will do to a large sector of the Protestant church, with its departures from the confession of Peter, exactly what the sixteenth century Reformation did to the Roman Catholic church in its misrepresentation of the confession of Peter.
12. The Neo-Evangelicals have deserted the battle to preserve a militant church.
13. Believers and non-believers cannot have Christian unity.
14. The issues involved here with Cain and Abel are those which precipitated the modern religious controversy.
15. A one-world church is the goal of the World Council of Churches and a one-world government is the goal of the United Nations.
16. The ICCC has been raised up by the Spirit of God to confront the harlot church as she is being put together by the apostate religious Protestant and Catholic forces.
17. A false love is Satan's tool to promote compromise and disobedience to Christ's Command.
18. The independent-agency structure which the Bible Presbyterian Church maintains has produced a decentralization and a genuine liberty which enables the faithful and non-political promotion of true doctrine.
19. These modernists are not merely "Bible-denying Christians"; they are infidels, and must be forever tagged as such.
20. Protestantism has surrendered the citadel to the Roman Catholics when it calls them Christians.

21. The evangelicals who work and hold fellowship with the modernist unbelievers are more abusive and do more harm to the cause of the Gospel and the purity of the church than the liberals themselves.
22. The various positions that men took in the sixteenth century toward the apostasy of Rome have their parallels today in the attitudes men take toward the apostasy in the Protestant Church.
23. Likewise in the local church . . . when every member is a soul winner—that church is in a constant state of revival.
24. Every preacher must believe that God has called him to a “great work.” The ministry is a high calling.
25. It is one responsibility to build a church; it is another order to guard the flock.
26. Small groups can do great things with God’s help.
27. The Church of Christ simply cannot be preserved without emphasis upon separation from the world and from apostasy.
28. The church is not going to convert the world, and, as the age comes to its close, wickedness will be exalted.
29. The churches need first reformation or separation, before evangelism.
30. The church is the pillar and the ground of the truth, and that truth is revealed truth.
31. The marks of a true church are faithful preaching of the Word of God, the administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of discipline. The means of grace for the blessing and the strengthening of the people of God are the Word of God, prayer, and the sacraments.

Life as McIntire Sees It

If the Statements on the Bible Presbyterian Church and the related ecclesiastical issues are a pointer to this generation for success, then McIntire's philosophy on life should also be studied. Here are further statements culled from his writings:

On Home

32. Our children are our most precious earthly responsibilities.
33. The greatest inheritance and the greatest possession that God gives to us, outside of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, is our own children made in our image and likeness.
34. What is there in this world any more precious than the absolute confidence of one who is close to you, with whom you can share everything and then depend upon that one's counsel and judgment?
35. The bonds which are eternal and which transcend even the ties of flesh and blood are the bonds of grace in Jesus Christ.
36. Any woman who compromises her principles in order to marry, any man who compromises his spiritual ideals in his soul in order to get some temporary gain, will pay the price. They will always suffer in the end.
37. There would be a great deal more happiness in homes if there were more understanding of the kind way and the right way of doing things.
38. Everyone of us ought to realise, whatever our place or station in life that we have influence for good or for bad, and whether we want it or not, our acts affect other people in their conduct for good or for ill.

39. Women can make life very cruel for their husbands, and they can prolong that cruelty in many unsuspected and devious ways.
40. A man is definitely influenced by his wife. That is why it is so important that man have a Christian wife. Relatives, friends, business associates—we are all influenced by other people.
41. Nothing is ever settled until it is settled right.
42. A strong will is dangerous unless it is subjected to the revealed will of God.
43. The best way to work upon any man is through his wife. The Devil worked through Eve.
44. Mixed marriages never pay. Both sides suffer.
45. It often happens that when a marriage goes on the rocks, greater sin follows. Sin enslaves.
46. Parents, here is our responsibility. We cannot trifle with God in rearing our young ones. He holds us accountable.
47. The most subtle temptations come through our loved ones. Satan frequently approaches us through intimate friends in whom we have the utmost confidence. So, temptation becomes subtle and powerful.
48. Children are gifts of God. There is no better place to rear them than in the Lord's house.

On Christian Life

49. Walking by faith involves trusting God's promises, believing His Word, depending upon His grace, and submitting to His commands.
50. Whenever the Lord sees faith, something happens.

51. The faith of a few has strengthened the faith of many, and the faith of many now arises to attempt and to expect greater things from God.
52. By faith God delivered some; by faith God gave others the strength to die.
53. It is impossible to outgive God.
54. Before a man can learn how to live with his fellow man, he must first come to a knowledge of fellowship with God by faith in Jesus Christ.
55. It was this Gospel that made America a land of righteousness.
56. We are what we are and where we are because of the determination of God.
57. A life of service is a happy life, even though the person who lives it may not have very much of this world's goods.
58. In living the Christian life discernment is absolutely essential for the glory of God.
59. When God's people obey Him, the effect of that obedience is unlimited.
60. Man in his wickedness proposes, but God in His providence disposes.
61. There are a great many things in this world that are more precious than life. Liberty is of more value than life. The favor of God is of more value than life.
62. Common sense is always used by the Almighty God in our dealings with each other.
63. A faithful servant finds a faithful God answering his prayer.
64. Men of faith are men of valor.

65. Faith desires and deserves the best.
66. There are differences in individuals. It is noticeable in any kind of work.
67. When people work together they must also bear with each other!
68. Fear destroys faith.
69. God's people must help one another.
70. There is always good sense to the right position. There is always a reasonable position to Christian testimony and action.
71. What God wants us to say all through life: "The Lord did it."
72. Men of faith become leaders!
73. Men should never be praised or rewarded for doing their duty!
74. You do what God tells you and God will take care of the consequences.
75. It is impossible to make a mistake in giving one's life to Jesus Christ, for with Him it is all blessing and riches and glory.
76. Giving is a manifestation of faith. It is also an expression of our love.
77. What is given to God is never wasted.
78. One of the first evidences of spiritual indifference and declension is the dropping of the tithe.
79. You can't exist without the nourishment of God's Word.
80. He that is not with me is against me. There is no neutrality.
81. The darker the day, the more the light will shine.

82. It takes issues to bring out what is in a man's heart.
83. Sickness has a refining influence in regard to the sins that beset us.
84. I know there are many people who do not like to go to funerals, yet it is a good thing once in a while to attend one, for it brings us face to face with reality.
85. It is a dangerous moment when any man dares to place his will in opposition to the revealed will of God.
86. Those who have suffered much can comfort much.
87. Suffering does sanctify. Suffering does bring a manifestation of grace not experienced before. And suffering is in the perfect plan of God for all of His true saints.
88. A man's labor is not his; his pastorate is not his; his life is not his. All belong to Christ.
89. What men believe determines what they do and where they stand.
90. All of these decisions are made for us . . . there is a time to be born, there is a time to die, and there is a time for everything under the sun, and the Lord is the One who determines these things for us.
91. Our Heavenly Father wants us to have the best that He can give us by His grace.
92. I shall never, never get over this blessed experience of being totally isolated, left solely in the presence of the Lord Himself.
93. We do not fear it (death). We look forward to it and we welcome it when God says that our labor is finished here.
94. We are the dust of this earth. We have no certain dwelling place.

95. But, beloved, when things seem to be the lowest so far as God's dealing with you is concerned, the depth of your most tragic experience is not the end of the story.

Chapter V

LINKAGE TO A GREAT CHURCH MOVEMENT

One decade after the establishment of the Bible Presbyterian Church, USA, and Faith Theological Seminary at Wilmington, Delaware, “the first city of the first state,” the founding pastor of the B-P Church, Singapore, entered Faith Seminary as a student. Little did he know he was being linked to a great Church movement.

Being a Presbyterian in upbringing, he found the new community he had come to live in most conducive and pleasant. He worshipped at a Church whose pastor, Dr Harold S Laird, was one of the founders of Faith Seminary itself. The style of worship was no different from what he experienced at home in Singapore. Being Reformed and premillennial he imbibed the teaching of Faith Seminary, under Dr Allan A MacRae and Dr J O Buswell, which was also Reformed and premillennial, with delight. He was like a fish taking to the water. But, what linked him suddenly to a great Church movement was his contact with Dr Carl McIntire, pastor of Collingswood Bible Presbyterian Church in New Jersey, and President of the Board of Directors of Faith Seminary.

The first time the Singapore student met Dr McIntire was at the full-hour Chapel at Faith on a wintry morning in January, 1948. The speaker had a commanding personality and spoke



Collingswood Bible Presbyterian Church, New Jersey

passionately on the need for a 20th Century Reformation. The Reformation of the 16th Century lighted by Martin Luther which restored vibrant life to the Church now needed revival. For the Church today is corrupted by the leaven of modernism and liberalism. There is now a great battle raging between fundamentalism and modernism, between the spirit of a 20th Century Reformation and the spirit of a modern Ecumenism. The rising Ecumenical or One-World Church movement was to be organised as the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam, August 1948. The WCC is not a Protestant Church Council but one that seeks to unite all Christendom, even Greek and Roman Catholics, in a One-World Church. (For this reason the word

“Christian” is purposely left out of its “masthead”). The WCC is a modern Ecumenical Council to take in every church with no regard to doctrine. Ultimately it is to embrace all religions.

As the speaker called for young men to arise and take up the cross to follow Jesus in this 20th Century Reformation, the Singapore student’s heart was strangely warmed. From that day onwards his heart was knit to that of the speaker as Jonathan’s to David’s.

Now the 20th Century Reformation movement that was gathering momentum was going also to Amsterdam for its inauguration as the International Council of Christian Churches, in direct confrontation with the World Council of Churches. What confirmed Timothy Tow’s heart for the Cause was a letter he received from his teacher in Nanking, China, Dr Chia Yu Ming (賈玉铭), requesting him to be his interpreter in Amsterdam. (Through the good offices of Dr A B Dodd, missionary of the



Dr Chia Yu Ming



Dr A B Dodd

Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Mission serving with North China Theological Seminary, Dr Chia was invited to the ICCC First Congress). Owing to his enrolment at Summer School 1948 this honour regrettably could not be accepted. Nevertheless, there was a more effective way of promoting the 20th Century Reformation and that was the introduction of Dr McIntire, now President of the ICCC, to Singapore in 1949. (Dr McIntire was then on his way to Indonesia and Australia for the ICCC Cause). To welcome the ICCC President in Singapore was Quek Kiok Chiang, Tow's former colleague in the Singapore Government Service. Quek who was introduced to the 20th Century Reformation movement stood unflinchingly on the Lord's side, though others in Singapore took little interest except Miss Leona Wu, President of the Evangelistic League and Principal of Chin Lien Bible Seminary.

Timothy Tow graduated in May 1950. In August of the same year the International Council of Christian Churches would hold its Second Congress in Geneva, Switzerland. During the interval he worked with Dr McIntire for a season and was invited as an observer to Geneva. By God's higher hand, coming from Singapore was Elder Quek Kiok Chiang as a delegate of the John Sung preaching bands—the Singapore Christian Evangelistic League and of Chin Lien Bible Seminary. Meanwhile Life Church (*Say Mia Tng*), Prinsep Street, Singapore, had called Timothy to inaugurate an English Service, and with it a request was made to the ICCC President to ordain him as a minister of the Gospel.

A special ordination council consisting of twenty-four ministers of the Bible Presbyterian Church, USA, under the moderatorship of Rev Dr J O Buswell, assisted by Dr Allan A MacRae, in lieu of the written examination, tested him orally a whole morning. When asked what God had called him to do, he replied he was called to be a pastor by the vow of his mother, and according to his own inclination to teach theology as well. Being

assured that the candidate for ordination was called of God the council of twenty-four ministers laid hands on him, significantly, in the city of John Calvin. By this laying of hands on the founding pastor of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore to be, it made him doubly linked to the great church movement of the Bible Presbyterians, USA, and of the 20th Century Reformation of the International Council of Christian Churches. For the next four decades he would be present at every Congress of the International Council of Christian Churches held on every continent save Australia. From 1968-88 he would preside in the Eastern Hemisphere of the ICCC movement, viz, the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches. As to the little English Service that he pastored at the old Prinsep Street Church from October 20, 1950, a little mustard seed of 30 members, who knew it would grow into a tree of at least 150 churches and parachurch organisations circling the globe by 1995? The speedy growth of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore is due in no small measure to the training of a new generation of ministers of the Gospel through Far Eastern Bible College which he founded in 1962. “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 shall 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.” (From *Forty Years on the Road to Church Growth*, T Tow).

Like Caleb, the one ordained in Calvin’s city can say by God’s grace to McIntire his comrade today, “And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, . . . As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in” (Joshua 14:10-11).

In 1993 when he attended the ICCC 14th World Congress in Philadelphia he dedicated a book he wrote on Calvin's Life and Works to Dr McIntire and Dr J C Maris, ICCC General Secretary.

Linked to a great church movement, the B-P Church, Singapore, insofar as its individual member churches remain loyal to the Word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:9), has become a growing church movement that, we pray, will remain faithful till Jesus returns. "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it" (Psalm 68:11). Amen.

In spite of the dissolution of the B-P Synod in October 1988, as the reader will discover later, B-P Churches in Singapore have increased the more at home and abroad since then. A blessing in disguise, it gave unhappily-yoked brethren the freedom to chart their own course, no more like running a three-legged race as before. In the words of St Paul to the Philippians, "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (Philippians 1:12).

Chapter VI

PERIOD OF LAYING FOUNDATIONS, 1950-57

Founding of Life Church English Service

The Life Church English Service was launched at 5.30 pm on October 20, 1950, at 144 Prinsep Street, in that “old, grey, little Church.” The new pastor presented his credentials to an eager congregation from the text, “Holding forth the Word of Life” (Philippians 2:16). Beyond expectation, 120 gathered at this inaugural service, so that the pulpit which was shifted to face one echelon of pews on the side of the old piano was returned to its central position—happy augury for the days to come!

The mainstay of this fledgling congregation comprised the Chans, Chias, Chuas, Hengs, Hsus, Lims, Queks, and Tows, 30 members transferred from the Teochew-speaking mother Church to the afternoon Service, together with their children and relatives. The Sunday School, launched the month following, began with an enrolment of 27 divided into three classes with the pastor as superintendent.

Insofar as the administration of the young Church was concerned, an interim committee was formed comprising elders and deacons appointed from the mother Church to assist the pastor. They met regularly once a month, for though the English



The Old Life Church at Prinsep Street

Service was small, the vision of its leaders was large. There was plenty that could be done for the advancement of God's Kingdom.

Policy of Immediate Self-support

In regard to finance, the young English-speaking congregation adopted a policy of immediate self-support through the pastor's faith and assurance. According to the Scriptural principle that "they which preach the Gospel should live of the gospel" (I Corinthians 9:14), the Lord's servant was content with whatever free-will offerings be brought in each week at the worship service and Sunday School. It is edifying to recall that by this policy the pastor's stipend on the first month amounted to \$110, which sum, however, was doubled in a matter of weeks. Jehovah Jireh!

An example of the enthusiastic support given the English Service was octogenarian Elder Tan Boo Chiang of the mother Church, a Chinese herb doctor to whom "English sounded like thunder to a duckling." Though he understood not a word of English, the grand old man never missed an afternoon worship

service except for illness. And when the offering was received, he would put a green five-dollar bill according as, he said, the Lord had prospered him in his practice. Another example of hilarious giving to the support of the young Church was an anonymous envelope containing \$86 dropped in the bag in response to the pastor's appeal for missions. Nor do we forget the loving concern of the mother Church for the "Ang Moh" (Red Hair) pastor, as the English-speaking pastor of the afternoon service was called by some toothless old ladies. From time to time, such as at Christmas and Chinese New Year, a sizeable angpow (red packet containing money) would be voted for him and his growing family.

Success of the Friday Night Family Worship

No sooner was the Sunday Service started than a Prayer Meeting was called to meet in church on Wednesday night. Owing to poor response of the members, the Wednesday night Prayer Meeting was substituted by a Friday night Family Worship, rotating from house to house. Writing in *Life Church Annual*, Volume 1, 1955, Edmund Lim (now settled in Australia) radiates with the fervent spirit of the early days.

By the grace of God this Friday Night Family Worship has proved a great success. It has grown from a few families to a total of 18 strong. Fundamentally the programme of the Family Worship follows that of the Lord's Day Service. The only difference is the inclusion of some refreshments at the end of the service. The service is made up of hymns, choruses, prayer, thanksgiving and Bible Study. We have finished studying the Books of Matthew and Genesis, and at present we are nearing the end of Revelation. Occasionally, lessons were drawn from other books to suit a particular situation.

Sometimes we were privileged to have a brother or sister, usually from a foreign land, come to address us. Miss Adeline Char of Honolulu, Dr A B Dodd of Taiwan, Dr

John G Bremen of Indonesia, Mr. Harry Liu of the Pocket Testament League, USA, and Rev Boon Mark Gittisarn of Thailand are some of our distinguished speakers. Several times we had to suspend Friday Night Worship in order that we might take part in some more important meetings of the Church, such as Bible Camp and revival meetings with Evangelist Newman Shih and Mr Wu Yung.

Prayer Meeting Revived

But prayer is the heart-throb of every Church. Its place now taken by the more popular Family Worship must be restored sooner or later! As the young Church grew in faith and knowledge, it was decided to revive the Prayer Meeting in 1955. Sister Heng Guek Im (now Mrs Phang Chin Yen) reported as follows.

On the 7th of June this year, a group of almost ten people gathered at the house of Elder and Mrs Lim Hong Hock for prayer. This was the first of our prayer meetings. Our hearts were filled with expectancy as we gathered there for prayer. For, Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there will I be in the midst of them." So we knew that Jesus would be with us, listening to our thanksgiving, praise and requests.

Ever since that day, Life Church's Prayer Meeting every Tuesday night has lived on. Though not too many be found on bended knee, to them who regularly come to prayer meeting this is their week's sweetest hour. Attendance today is 100.

Church Visitations, Counsellings, Funerals, Weddings

Both the Friday night Family Worship and the Tuesday night Prayer meeting have become an integral part of the Church life. These blessed hours of worship and prayer, apart from their use in

propping up the spiritual life of the flock, have served also as a rendezvous for fellowship and mutual visitation. After the vertical exercise of communion with God we need the horizontal of the communion of saints. Through the “mid-week” meetings the identity and unity of the Church have been steadily forged through the years. Visiting one another informally after service over a cup of tea and a piece of cake is a healthy and invigorating exercise of the Church.

But visitation between members is incomplete without pastoral oversight. There are always those problems, simple or complex, that a member or family would confide only in the pastor. From the beginning this situation has entailed a good part of the pastor’s time—in counselling (more often through the telephone on 24-hour service) and house-to-house visitation.

In order to carry out the latter duty in a metropolis like Singapore, swift transportation without the delay of waiting at bus stops is every pastor’s desire. Since the Church was in her infancy and the giving of the young members, after paying for general expenditure, was barely sufficient to provide for the pastor and his family, there was never a thought in his mind that he should own a car. An amateur cyclist in his younger days, all he could wish for to transport himself about without much ado was a bicycle. His wish came true when a sister bought one of his choice—a BSA racer for \$165! This robust state of affairs lasted a year until the cyclist-pastor was promoted to drive an old Ford Anglia, kindly bestowed by his father.

Involved in all the vicissitudes of human life, the pastor found himself rejoicing with them that do rejoice in officiating weddings and weeping with them that weep in funerals (Romans 12:15). It is said that some members see the pastor only three times in all their life—baptism at birth, wedding solemnization in adulthood, funeral in old age. God forbid that this should be the schedule for Lifers!

Soul-winning Through Special Meetings

Talking of revival meetings with Evangelist Newman Shih and Mr Wu Yung as reflected in Edmund Lim's report, these were convened, in fact, almost as frequently as those China "big boys" visited Singapore. An open door church to every Bible-believing preacher, the English Service joined hands with the mother Church to hold special services and evangelistic meetings. Soul-winning was our emphasis from the very start. Sweet to our memory were the meetings held with Rev Calvin Chao, Rev John E Su, Attorney James E Bennet, Dr A B Dodd, Dr Percy Crawford and his T V Trio, etc, in the first years of the Church's life. Not a few who are lively stones in Life Church or Zion today came to the Lord during this period.

Youth Fellowship

Life Church English Service was a young people's Church. And so the accent on youth was opportunely stressed as they began to find an identity among themselves. In this regard the pastor was helped by the first American friend he found while a student in Nanking, viz, Miss Grace Jephson, now transferred to Singapore away from Mao's "Liberation." Reporting on the founding of the Life Church Youth Fellowship, Tan Swee Teck (now settled in Los Angeles, California) wrote:

It was on January 3rd, 1953 that a group of enthusiastic young people of our Church gathered together to have Young People's Fellowship. At that time, Miss Jephson of the CIM was with us, and it was she who helped us form this group. From then onward, we met once a fortnight, and we had many wonderful Christian meetings together.

After we had quite a big attendance, we decided to organise ourselves. On July 11th, 1953 we held a Business Meeting to elect officers and set up a constitution. From that time onward, the group came to be known as the "Life

Church Youth Fellowship.” Its aims are: 1. To Know Christ. 2. To make Him Known. Our first president was Dr Tow Siang Hwa. With his committee he proceeded to arrange programmes for the group.

By this time Miss Jephson left us, and we welcomed Miss Swarr to be our advisor. About this time we also realised the importance of meeting more often, and so we increased our meetings to one every week.”

Reorganisation of the Sunday School

Just as the young people of the Youth Fellowship at this time saw a new day under the vigorous leadership of Dr Tow Siang Hwa, there was felt a great need for the revamping of the Sunday School. Dr Tow was appointed superintendent by the interim committee and under his guidance the Sunday School was reorganised on September 22, 1953. According to a historical survey by Deacon (now Elder) Chia Kim Chwee, Miss Sullivan of the CIM was elected Secretary. Through her was introduced the Gospel Light lesson materials. A Four Point System for Beginners and the Primary Departments and a Six Point Record System for the rest whereby marks would be given for attendance at Sunday School, etc, were adopted. In two years the Sunday School attendance rose to 250.

Baptisms

As soon as new souls were born into the Kingdom, whether through the regular sermons and Sunday School on the Lord’s Day, or through revival and evangelistic meetings, these were further instructed by the pastor for Baptism. Baptism is commanded in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). This the young pastor began to administer upon the new converts with attendant power from the Lord.

Although two regular Baptismal Services are held at Life Church today, at Easter and Anniversary Thanksgiving, special baptisms are given according to the candidates' needs, sometimes at a sick bed in hospital. In the early days of the English Service, the Church Register listed the following baptised:

On February. 11, 1951: Mary Low, Eleanor Low, Rosalind Low, Tow Sin Gek, Lee Hoon Song, Lee Hoon Kang. (Re-affirmation of faith: Tan Cheng Im, Jean Wong Benjamin). On June 24, 1951: Edmund Sim Wee Soon (infant), Judy Heng Siew Gek (infant), Koh Chong Teck, Wong Meng (Mrs Lee Choon Ngee). (Re-affirmation of faith: Chia Chung Kwang, Chia Lee Eng, Tow Siang Pang, Tow Siang Kow, Tow Siang Kia, Tow Soon Kim, Tow Soon Lang). It pleased the Lord to add to the Church slowly but surely such as should be saved.

An example of one who found Christ by attending the Church regularly is the testimony of Peter Chong Jit Loy (now settled in London). He says,

I have been to many churches, but still I was not saved. This shows that even if you are a regular church-goer, you might still not be saved. I have been to a Roman Catholic Church. It did not help me at all. The Roman Catholics do not worship Christ. They are idol worshippers. I have been to a Seventh-Day Adventist Church and I did not like it. So I stopped going to church for some time, and I turned to heathen ways, being encouraged by my parents.

But then I had a Bible, and I decided to read it. I did not read it every day, but I finished it in a year. I found it to be an excellent book beyond praise.

About this time, a friend of mine invited me to Life Church and I readily obliged him. I learnt a lot in this Church, felt the thrill of salvation and learnt how to pray. Finally, I am glad to be saved, not by works, but by grace of God.

The Importance of Daily Witnessing

But the daily witness of Lifers to those who had never heard of our Saviour was equally important. Not a few in our Churches today have found Christ as a result of our members' constant witnessing. Here's Elder Khoo Peng Kiat's testimony of how he came to confess Jesus in baptism.

I was born in a non-Christian home, and believe me, I never knew about Jesus Christ at all until I met Dr Tow. Life before that was meaningless, and like an empty dream. I was spiritually blind. I was born again on Easter Day, April 18, 1953. Ever since that day, I have received not only peace of mind, heart and soul, but also much joy and happiness of His salvation.

Another testimony is from Dr Ang Beng Chong, now Elder of Hebron B-P Church:

I come from a non-Christian family. I had never heard of the Gospel. So I did not know that I was a sinner. All I knew was that I must be a good boy so that I could go to Heaven. But I did not know that "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8,9).

One day my friend, William Seah, told me about the Lord Jesus Christ and brought me to Sunday School. I heard the gospel but I was rather slow to realise its full meaning. Then one evening when Pastor Tow preached I understood it clearly. I heard that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) but "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:9,10). So I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as my own personal Saviour.

The Effective Ministry of Bible Camps

A further outreach for the salvation and consecration of young souls is the ministry of Bible Camps. Life Church was one of the very first to hold Bible Camps for the young members. The early camps became a pattern to the many that have been held thereafter by our branch Churches.

Our first Bible camp was held at the Telok Paku Government School, Changi, December 18-24, 1954. Being a first venture, only 50 were registered. Rev Wilson Wang of Penang was invited to be the Camp Speaker. Among the ten young souls who yielded to the Lord was Philip Heng, now pastor of Galilee Church. In his testimony on how he was led to give himself to full-time service he looked back to that day when he sobbed alone in a chair (as observed by one of the campers) at Telok Paku:

At the first Bible Camp of the Life Church in December '54, I felt the Hand of the Lord upon me. The



First Bible Camp of Life Church

Lord was challenging me to consecrate myself to Him. I hesitated a while before I finally yielded myself to let God have his way with my life.

Since the first Bible camp was such a blessing to the young people, a second camp was repeated at the same site, August 11-18, 1955. One hundred young persons attended with Dr G D James as the speaker.

Founding of the Malaysia Pioneer Mission

In obedience to the Great Commission to go into all the world with the Gospel, a meeting was called in March 1952 at the Beng Wan Road home of the then Elder Quek Kiok Chiang to found a missionary society. Sixteen Lifers responded.

The story of the founding of the Malaysia Pioneer Mission (MPM) is told in the *Malaysia Christian*, Volume II Number 4, as follows:

After hearing heart-warming testimonies from the conveners and discussing a draft constitution, being fully assured of the Lord's blessing in this undertaking, the meeting voted unanimously to constitute itself Board of the Malaysia Pioneer Mission. An Executive Committee comprising a pastor, a school teacher, a doctor, a merchant and three Government officers was elected to run the Lord's business. Thus, the Malaysia Pioneer Mission was born.

The choice of the word "Malaysia" for the name of this mission is obvious, for this work is begun by Malaysians to reach the unsaved in Malaya, and lands beyond known as Malaysia. "Pioneer" is taken in order to remind ourselves of the importance of reaching out to unevangelised regions. This fact was emphasised by the apostle when he said, 'Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel not where Christ was named' (Romans 15:20).

The Malaysia Pioneer Mission is not a Missions Committee of the Life Church. It is constituted an independent unit by itself in order to admit other Christians of like mind into its membership; and indeed, several have joined us since its inception.

A thanksgiving offering was taken the same night to indicate our indebtedness to the Saviour. It totalled \$241,



Malaysia Pioneer Mission preaching in the new villages

which sum, upon being announced by the Treasurer, drew a spontaneous “Praise God” from each gladsome heart.

Missionary Tours to Sixty New Villages in the Federation

In the early days of the MPM Rev Tow and Deacon (now Rev) Hsu Chiang Tai were sent to evangelise some sixty new villages out of a total of six hundred in the Federation of Malaya. This was at the height of the Communist uprisings, but God protected their steps. A hundred thousand Gospel tracts written by Miss Tay Swee Lan specially for the village folk, together with thousands of Gospel portions, were partly distributed.

Reporting this missionary outreach in the *Malaysia Christian*, the leader of the team wrote:

Almost every village we visited was virgin soil for the Gospel seed. Crowds gathered in curiosity around two Big Town gentlemen. Some asked to buy Tiger Balm, taking us to be Chinese medicine hawkers, others remarked we were vanguards of a theatrical troupe, ‘coming to town.’ But they were none the worse when we gave them instead the water of eternal life from the fountain of Jesus Christ. Everywhere we went the Lord opened a wide door of opportunity. Particularly glad were we for the generous cooperation extended by principals and teachers of the village community schools. We were not hindered from preaching to two to three hundred school children at a time. These were made to line up in the school hall, or in the open, by their superiors. After the message was given, each one gladly received a tract or a New Testament Portion . . .

Through missionary visits made with the MPM team to the East Coast, Miss Adeline Char, independent missionary from Honolulu, Hawaii, was led to establish her first mission station at Jemaluang, Johore, April 1953.

Adoption of Kelapa Sawit Mission Church

The MPM settled down to a more regular ministry when in January 1954, jointly with the Singapore Christian Evangelistic League (Miss Leona Wu), it took over the management and support of Kelapa Sawit (43 miles north of Singapore) from Dr Andrew Gih's Evangelise China Fellowship.

The cost of running this newly-adopted mission station was \$230 per mensem—\$100 each for two Chin Lien Bible School graduates, and \$30 for house rent. Since this work was equally borne by the Evangelistic League, the MPM was responsible for \$115 per month. Praise the Lord, our Board members pledged to give \$117, two dollars above the required sum!



Kelapa Sawit Mission Church

Ministry of Defence of the Faith

Hitherto, we have seen the young Church in worship and work, in building up young souls in the most holy faith and in every effort of extending the influence of the Gospel. This is only one side of the picture. The other side, which is equally important, now comes under review. It is the Church's involvement in a phase of God's work much neglected by the main body of evangelical Churches today, viz, the defence of the Faith.

In this connection, we have noted from the beginning how the Life Church English service, while in the embryonic stage, was linked to the Twentieth Century Reformation Movement of the International Council of Christian Churches through her pastor and elder. Thus, when the Constitution of this English work was discussed during the interim period after the young pastor's return from abroad, it was declared that the Life Church English Service, while remaining a filial daughter to the mother Church, would be no party to the Ecumenical Movement nor counted a member in the World Council of Churches through the Malayan Christian Council, into which our Chinese Presbyterian Synod was drawn.

Nevertheless, we were de facto linked to the Synod and to Synod we would go to raise the testimony of separation in the name of Life Church. Commissioners from Life Church to the Synod comprised Rev Timothy Tow, Elder Quek Kiok Chiang and Deacon Hsu Chiang Tai for a number of years, and each year the matter of withdrawal became an issue for debate. The zeal in contending for the Faith once delivered unto the saints by the "three musketeers" may be seen in the following report in the *Malaysia Christian* Volume II Number 1, December '52-February '53:

Reasons for Withdrawal from the Malayan Christian Council

At the recent Synod of Chinese Presbyterian Churches in Malaya a motion was made by the Life Church (Chinese section), Singapore that our Synod withdraw from the MCC on these grounds:-

1. Membership of our Synod in the MCC, being effected without prior knowledge or approval of member churches of the Synod, is unconstitutional and should therefore be declared null and void.
2. Not a few of the promoters and leaders of the MCC are modernists who do not accept the fundamentals of the faith, including the infallibility of the Holy Scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, His bodily resurrection and personal second coming.
3. Leaders of the MCC by their holding office in the Singapore-Johore Inter-Religious Organisation, comprising Mohammedans, Buddhists, Roman Catholics, Hindus, Sikhs, and Jews, have by such conduct compromised with human religions God's only way of salvation through the blood atonement of Jesus Christ His Son. (Dr Archer, Methodist Bishop for South East Asia; Dr Chelliah of the Anglican Church; Dr Johnston and Rev Henderson of the English Presbyterian Church are on the 1953 committee of the Organisation. Dr Johnston is also General-Secretary of this Synod and Vice-President of the Singapore Christian Council).
4. The MCC has no creedal statement to regulate membership and so believers and unbelievers are tolerated in the fold.
5. The MCC is a member of the International Missionary Council which is associated with the World Council of Churches to promote the modernist ecumenical (one world-church) movement in utter

disregard of truth. Leaders of the movement are greater apostles of unbelief.

6. The MCC is a part of the one world church movement promoted by the IMC and WCC which include in their membership the idolatrous Greek Orthodox and Unitarians who deny the deity of Christ. Membership in the MCC would thus make this Synod unequally yoked with such unbelievers in disobedience to the word of God.
7. The MCC is a part of the ecumenical movement promoted by the IMC and MCC which are seeking a union of Protestants and Roman Catholics. This is undoing the Protestant Reformation and betraying the very martyrs of the Reformation.

We did not succeed in withdrawing our Synod from the MCC, the vote being 15 favouring outright withdrawal and 46 supporting an amended motion that affiliation be continued, but that a memorandum be presented to the MCC to seek an explanation of the charges against it.

Last Battle at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Muar

The last battle for the Faith was fought in Muar at the Trinity Presbyterian Church when commissioners from all parts of Singapore and Malaya gathered for the double function of dedication of the new church. This was in January 1955. Commissioners from Life Church were Rev Timothy Tow, Elder Quek Kiok Chiang, and Deacon Quek Khiok Meng. Of course the battle was lost against the usual phalanx of modernist missionaries and subservient national pastors. In the same month, according to the Life Church Weekly Chronicler, “The Interim Committee decides to make our Church fully constituted and to sever connections with the Synod on account of modernism.”

The Beginnings of the Bible-Presbyterian Church

In order to distinguish ourselves from the Synod churches we prefixed the word Bible to make ours the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. January 1955, indeed, saw the birth of the Bible-Presbyterian Church Movement.

Now that the English Service had come of age and was constituted the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, action was taken to transfer those members of the Interim Committee who would go with the new Church. They were Rev Timothy Tow, Elders Quek Kiok Chiang and Lim Hong Hock, Deacons Heng Mui Kiah, Hsu Chiang Tai, Quek Khiok Meng and Ang Kheng Chiang. To augment the strength of the new session, the Lord's Day, March 27, 1955 was declared Elections Day. At this congregational meeting two new deacons were chosen: Lim Khng Seng and Tow Siang Hwa, and two deaconesses: Ruth Lim (now Mrs Andrew Heng) and Ong Soo Kheng. The Church also voted to affiliate with the International Council of Christian Churches and with its Far Eastern chapter, the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches.

Hosting the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches in Singapore, August 1956

The greatest effort made to raise the ICCC witness on the national scene was undertaken in August 1956 when Life Bible-Presbyterian Church with the help of Central Christian Church played host to the Third General Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches. With further help from Rev Torrey Shih of Jubilee Church, the Assembly met in the day sessions at Prinsep Street and in the evening at Jubilee Church, Outram Road. A mass rally was held at the Victoria Memorial Hall with Dr Carl McIntire, ICCC president, delivering the message, and our

Combined Church Choir of 85 voices singing under the baton of Mr Philip Heng.

Hitherto the young people of our Church had heard much of the ICCM Movement. Now they saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears what the fight for the Faith was all about. For a glimpse into those feverish days, here are the impressions of Tan Toh Kern entitled “The Blessings of the FECCC Conference” in *Life Church Annual* (Volume II, December 1956):

I want to thank the Lord for granting me the privilege of attending the FECCC Conference from August 5th to 12th, 1956. God’s mighty hand had blessed and guided the Third Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches. There could be no better theme than this which was chosen for the conference, ‘For the Word of God and for the Testimony of Jesus Christ.’ I noticed that in all the meetings, the theme was always there.

I liked the meetings so much that if it be God’s will, I hope that another FECCC Conference would be held here as soon as possible. For to be in these meetings was like attending a big feast where are laid delicious foods fit for kings. In this case the food was much more delicious. It was spiritual food, and I can say, I had myself really been filled.

I liked the Devotional Messages and talks like “What Christians Should Know” and all the night meetings. It is indeed very interesting to hear reports from all over the Far Eastern countries—how Roman Catholicism, Modernism and other religions were obstacles to the Lord’s work; and also how many countries have still not heard the Gospel yet. During the night meetings at Jubilee Church, we were told of the Holy Bible being the Infallible Word of God, how the Power of the Precious Blood of Christ can save sinners. We were also told of the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, of how to build Independent Asian

Churches and of Evangelism through the Churches. Dr Carl McIntire, president of the International Council of Christian Churches told us about Redeeming the Evangelical Message and in his concluding message he encouraged us to continue the Lord's work, although we might be persecuted—for we still have the companionship of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Further blessings brought to Singapore by the coming of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches were in the form of 24 souls saved at a series of Gospel Meetings before the Conference through the preaching of Rev Antonio Ormeo, president of the Council and pastor of the First Baptist Church, Manila.

Another blessing is a theme song Rev J S Scarrow, delegate from New Zealand, was inspired to write on the plane that flew him into Singapore:

*All Scripture, Lord, as Thou hast said,
Through holy men, inspired to write,
Is given to Thy Church on earth
To furnish fallen men with light.*

*We meet to pledge with solemn vow
Thy written word shall ever stay.
Nor shall we wrest one smallest part,
Nor add thereto nor take away.*

*The Word made flesh was virgin born,
Eternal Son of God is He.
Two natures,—God and man in one,
Redeemer through His blood to be.*

*Born of Thy Spirit, Lord, we praise,
One Only God and Three in One.
Oh Abba Father, hear our praise:
Thou lovest the world and gave Thy Son.*

*We therefore strive, contending all
Not in our strength; the battle's Thine;*

*Oh speed the promised day of Christ,
That blessed day, that glorious time.*

Ordination of Three Pastors

On the last day of Conference, August 12, 1956 these blessings were climaxed with the ordination at Prinsep Street of Rev Quek Kiok Chiang and Rev Hsu Chiang Tai by a Council of Bible Presbyterian ministers, among whom were the ICCC President, Dr A B Dodd, Rev John Dorsey of India and Rev John K L Young of Japan. Rev Phoa Hock Seng, old friend from the days of the John Sung Revival, 1935-38, and pastor of Pasir Panjang Church, being of Anglican tradition, was ordained by Bishop D A Thompson of the Reformed Episcopal Church of Great Britain.

The same night saw the coming together of like-minded brethren from seven churches to form a Malaysia Council of Christian Churches to further the work of the Twentieth Century Reformation in our lands.

Opening of Batu Pahat

Two weeks after the FECCC Assembly, Pastor Tow was invited to conduct a revival meeting in Batu Pahat, Malaysia where his doctor father had established a clinic and dispensary. He brought a team of zealous Young Lifers comprising William Seah, Vincent Tay, Henry Heng, Lawrence Leong, Tan Toh Kern, Tow Shen Pan and John. Several of these gave testimonies of their salvation. The evangelist preached on the necessity of the new birth to qualify for entry to heaven. Sixteen hands were raised to receive Jesus Christ! After this meeting the pastor was requested to moderate the English Service of Grace Church, Batu Pahat. This involved a monthly visit which he maintained till end of 1964.

First Branch Sunday School

No sooner had the Pastor undertaken the Batu Pahat ministry than he led a team to start a first branch Sunday School at Sembawang in the home of Mr and Mrs Seow Chong Pin. This was January 1957.

Acquisition of Zion Kindergarten

The greatest outreach after the FECCC Assembly, however, was Zion Kindergarten. As a result of the wider and warmer fellowship engendered through the FECCC Assembly our Church was drawn closer to the pastor of Jubilee Church, Rev Torrey Shih. Mr Shih at this time was a trustee of the Christian Stewardship Foundation (CSF), a Christian Enterprise founded by Rev Jason Linn of Hong Kong and Indonesia. (He is the author of the Chinese missionary classic translated into English by T Tow under the title, *Pioneering in Dyak Borneo*). The CSF had just completed a nine-classroom Kindergarten at 3-5 Tavistock Avenue, Serangoon Gardens. As the classrooms were vacant on the Lord's Day, Life Church was invited to start a Sunday School there. This invitation was gladly accepted, and on April 7, 1957, the Zion Sunday School was inaugurated with Deacon Chia Kim Chwee as Superintendent.

In the meantime news was heard of the Zion property's grave financial embarrassment involving the probability of the closing down of Zion Sunday School! It came like a bolt from the blue. *Malaysia Christian*, June 14, 1957, reports on the sudden crisis:

The situation became so acute by the beginning of this month that an offer to sell the property with all its furniture and paraphernalia at about \$75,000 was made to various Christian Institutions. We were one of the earliest to be solicited, while others included churches, missionary societies of the West and a Seminary. When all these efforts

failed, we were informed that the alternative was to go to auction, which might mean Zion's falling into Gentile hands and the closing of our Sunday School. Lamentations were heard all round, not the least amongst us, especially with regard to our Sunday School's fate.

In this hopeless situation, the only ray we could see was the founding of a church on the groundwork of the Sunday School; the appointment of a dedicated supervisor for the Kindergarten and the immediate alleviation of the crushing financial burden by interest-free loans from Christian friends—God's Church, God's man and God's money only could save the situation. And since all hopes of other Christian Institutions stepping in were lost, we began to feel burdened for Zion.

The lot of saving the Zion property fell on the leaders of Life Church for the simple reason that Lifers, in all their struggles for the Faith, have practised "working out their salvation." They have followed the example of the apostle Paul, ". . . these hands have ministered unto my necessities; and to them that are with me I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak" (Acts 20:34,35). While Rev Quek Kiok Chiang launched out from Life Church as the newly installed pastor of Zion, Rev Tow offered himself as principal of the Kindergarten. The situation could not be saved without putting our own shoulders to the wheel. Self help with God's help is the best help.

Chapter VII

PERIOD OF CONSOLIDATION AND GROWTH, 1958-64

The Cry for a New House of Worship

In the heyday of Life Church Sunday School under the superintendentship of Dr Tow Siang Hwa, when the old Church at Prinsep Street was bursting her seams to hold the classes together, a spontaneous cry from the congregation rose up, "Let us find land to build a new church." By God's Grace, one most suitably and beautifully situated was soon found through Elder Quek Kiok Chiang upon enquiry at the Government Land Office.

In September 1955, Mr Ang Kheng Leng was requested to be our honorary architect. Through him plans were submitted to Government showing our requirements. By May 1956, news of approval of the land at Gilstead for the building of a church was received. After submission of an amended plan in December 1956, 52,223 square feet of land near the junction of Dunearn and Gilstead Roads was leased to us for 99 years as of August 1, 1957. The fee was \$25,920 with an annual rent of \$1036.80. Trustees of the property named in the "Indenture" between "His Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony of Singapore for and on behalf of the Queen's Most Gracious Majesty" and Life Bible-Presbyterian Church were Quek Kiok

Chiang, Lim Hong Hock, Heng Mui Kiah and Lim Khng Seng. Jubilant over this long-awaited approval, the Church held a Land-claiming and Thanksgiving Service on the property on July 20, 1957. In the meantime offerings to the Building Fund steadily flowed in, so that the \$30,000 mark was surpassed on the Seventh Anniversary Thanksgiving of the Church.

Vision of a Bible College

Now, while Life Church was much engrossed in the preparation of building a new Church, she did not allow the material to override the spiritual—the lively stones that build up the congregation, the spiritual house.

One vision that had been shared by elders of our Church Movement since as early as 1954 was the founding of a Bible College to train workers, not only for our expanding ministries, but also for the propagation of the Gospel and defence of the Faith throughout the Far East.

Therefore, when Pastor Tow was delegated by the Church to attend the Fourth Plenary Congress of the ICCC in Brazil, August 1958, it was felt that this should be a golden opportunity for him to take another year's study at Faith Seminary towards a higher Master's degree, in order to equip him better for the teaching ministry. At a Session Meeting held at Deacon and Mrs Seow's one late night, the Session granted him one year's study leave and appointed Rev Quek Acting Pastor during his absence. Rev Tow was commended to God on his double mission to Brazil and to the United States in July 1958.

The pastor obtained the Master of Sacred Theology from his alma mater at end of May, 1959. He arrived back to his post in Singapore on July 2, to a congregation full of life and spirit under the cheerful ministry of the Acting Pastor.

Theological training of our consecrated young people became such an ever-increasing burden upon the pastor's heart that he wrote in the *Malaysia Christian*, (Volume VII, Number 13), September 6, 1959, under the caption "The Trend is Toward the Trained":

Hitherto we have sent some of our young people to the West for theological training. But if the Lord will call another half dozen, how can we afford to send them all? The solution to training future ministers of the Gospel, I believe, is the founding of a Bible College in Singapore. Yes, a Bible College, a College that reverently teaches the Bible to be the infallible, inerrant Word of God, that seeks to obey all its commands, that will make no compromise whatsoever with the subtle forces of Satan that are so actively undermining theological institutions everywhere today.

We need to found a Bible College that will nurture the future leaders of our churches, who will be able to stand in the gap in an evil day, and advance the work of the Lord by opening more and more preaching centres that the Kingdom of God might be extended to the uttermost part of the earth.

The flicker of such a hope was first lighted at the Session meeting of the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church last week. But we are still waiting upon the Lord for the breathing of His Spirit on the hearts of other children. If you believe as we do that a Bible College should be established in Singapore, may we hear words of encouragement from you.

1960—Year of Rapid Expansion

Founding of Galilee Church

Two of Life Church's staunchest friends were the Rev and Mrs Paul Contento of CIM whom the pastor had known since his student days in Nanking, 1946. This exuberant couple came to Singapore in 1951 in the great exodus of missionaries from the China Continent ahead of the Communist "Liberation." Mrs Contento helped Life Church Sunday School by running a teachers' training class, whilst Rev Contento preached at the Sunday pulpit from time to time.

During the Easter Holidays, April 17-21, 1960, Rev Contento was invited to hold a Gospel campaign at Prinsep Street. It was during this week of co-labouring in the Lord's work that offer was made to us to take over tenancy of their house at Pasir Panjang for the continuance of a Christian testimony. The Contentos were leaving for Vietnam in May to their new field of service.

Now, the Contento house was situated right on the seafront and used often as a Christian Conference Centre. Delighted with such a handsome offer, the pastor quickly reported to Session. To his surprise the brethren unanimously replied, "Let us take it!" However, it must be recorded that the decision to take over the Contento house was precipitated by the consideration of our Pasir Panjang young members' need of a meeting place. These Pasir Panjang young Christians had seceded from a Church on the West Coast. Having nowhere to go they worshipped at Life Church. How thrilled they were when informed of the Session's decision!

The decision of Life Church to found a Galilee Bible-Presbyterian Church on the premises of the Contento house was transmitted to the "Presbytery." It was heartily adopted as a "Presbyterial" project. The support of Zion and Faith, an offshoot of Zion, was most encouraging.

The transfer of tenancy from the Contentos to Galilee was effected just a few hours before the missionaries sailed on May 7, 1960 for Saigon. On June 5, 1960 at 2 pm Galilee Church was inaugurated. Rev Tow became her honorary pastor and Deacon Chia Hong Chek, head of Galilee Sunday School. Elder O J Tassicker of Australia and Rev Marvin Dunn of OMF supplied the pulpit regularly once a month. When the Bible Presbyterian Synod, Collingswood, New Jersey, USA, heard of the founding of Galilee Church, they sent the little Church by the sea, fraternal greetings by the hand of the Stated Clerk, Rev A Franklin Faucette.

Expansion into a Presbytery

Leaving Pasir Panjang for a moment, let us retrace what was fast developing in Serangoon Gardens before this. On its first anniversary in June 1958, Zion Church started a Chinese Service on the same premises. As our family of Churches was growing, a closer tie with one another for united action was deemed most essential. As the editorial of *Malaysia Christian*, dated May 8, 1960, says: “The need of forming a presbytery to further the common interests of Life Bible-Presbyterian Church and her daughter congregation Zion Bible-Presbyterian Church, with a ‘granddaughter’ Chinese-speaking congregation, was felt as early as 1958.”

Owing to many delaying circumstances, the formation of the Presbytery was deferred. When Central Christian Church in town moved up to Serangoon Gardens and merged with Zion Chinese Church to become Faith Bible-Presbyterian Church in January, 1960, this important step of advancement could no longer be postponed. And so, on May 2, 1960, the Presbyters came together, whereby an “Interim Presbyterial Committee” was formed to prepare for the formal inauguration of the Presbytery.

On the Lord's Day, July 24, 1960, the Singapore Presbytery of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore and Malaya was inaugurated by a duet of bilingual thanksgiving services. The first service, held at Zion Kindergarten, was led by Rev Quek. The second service at Prinsep Street was led by Rev Tow. Two other pastors, Rev Quek Khee Swee and Rev Hsu Chiang Tai also participated, while the Elders comprised Lee Tsu Hwai, Chia Poh Jian, Teo See Yah, Heng Mui Kiah, Lim Hong Hock, Lim Khng Seng, O J Tassicker (of Australia). From the diaconate came Dr Tow Siang Hwa and Deacon Chia Kim Chwee as observers.

Decision to Establish a Bible College at Last!

The arrival of Rev Philip Clark, September 13, 1960, on behalf of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions was an important event. At a dinner given in his honour by the Presbytery, the much-discussed subject of opening a Bible College became the topic of the evening. The dinner ended joyously for the launching of a Bible College at last with Rev Clark's promise "to cooperate with us on a fifty-fifty partnership basis." What was meant by this partnership was that "both nationals and missionaries were to labour together on an equal basis of Christian love and cooperation. As sons of the soil we should own the property and be responsible for its erection. As missionaries they should be fully supported from home and help us in the things we could not do, such as filling certain vacancies of our faculty. Missionaries using our property would pay adequate rent."

At a Presbytery meeting held at Zion Kindergarten on Monday, September 19 at which all deacons and deaconesses of Life, Zion, Faith and Galilee Churches were also invited, the lot for the launching of a Far Eastern Bible College (the name was suggested by Dr Tow Siang Hwa) was cast. The College was purposely constituted an independent institution within the

fellowship of our Bible-Presbyterian Churches. The location was also found—the spacious, sylvan site of the new Life Bible-Presbyterian Church at Gilstead Road. An interim three-man committee was elected to draft a constitution and prospectus for the College and serve as Liaison between the joint sessions and the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. These three men were Rev Timothy Tow, Rev Quek Kiok Chiang and Dr Tow Siang Hwa. However, the decision of the Presbytery had still to be ratified by Life Church.

With Life Church's ratification the proposed one-storey Kindergarten behind the new Life Church at Gilstead was given up for a two-storey Bible College L-Annex, with dormitories for forty men and women students. The close of the bumper year saw the Church and Bible College Building Fund reaching the \$100,000 mark.

Before the year of rapid expansion, 1960, came to an end, God was to open two more avenues of service.

How Jurong Sunday School and Church Came into Being

At first it was a Children's Bible Class started at the home of Bro and Mrs Chandra, 14½ miles Jurong Road, on October 8, 1960. It was a Saturday Class and the lone teacher was Ivy Tan.

The circumstances leading to this new outreach were these. For some time Chee Ah Chai had been bringing Chandra to worship at Prinsep Street, particularly during the Contento Easter campaign. Chandra believed.

On the evening of September 9, 1960, when the pastor returned from Korea after an evangelistic campaign, the phone rang just as he stepped into his flat at 10A Kim Pong Road. It was Chandra's voice urgently calling from the Children's Ward of the

General Hospital. When the pastor arrived at hospital after Family Worship at the Tassickers, he saw Chandra nervously carrying a Bible in his hand.

Let Chandra continue from here. In the *Bible-Presbyterian Annual* (Volume V), he says,

On the 1st of September my child Joseph Roslan fell from the arms of my daughter while being carried. From then onwards he became ill. We took him to the General Hospital on the 7th, seeing he was not better. The doctors said he must be admitted. On the 8th he got worse and by Friday the 9th he was in a very bad condition. The doctors told me that they were going to give blood transfusion. I rang Rev Tow's house the same morning but was told he was in Korea, and was coming back the same evening. At 6.30 pm sharp I rang him when he was just climbing the steps to his house. He answered my call and said he would be coming over at 10 pm as he was going to a family service at Mr Tassicker's house.

All this time I was uneasy, running here and there. At 10 pm he was at the ward. When he met me, the first question was if I attend church. I said, "No." He asked me what I wanted him to do. I said, "Please baptise my child." He said, "You must give up Roman Catholicism and idol worship. You must have faith in Jesus Christ." I said, "Yes." He then told me that baptism itself cannot save anyone and that it was only an outward sign of the inward grace that God worked in the heart. I believed what he said and we both went into the ward to see my wife and baby. The same teaching was given to her and she answered yes. Rev Tow baptised our child after asking God first to save his soul and then his body, according to our faith. The next day my child's blood pressure rose up. My wife told me he had become much better. The doctors were much surprised at his rapid recovery. He was discharged on September 12.

Now listen to Mrs Chandra's testimony: "I could hear my son wailing in the Children's Ward. I as a mother was feeling the difficulty of restraining my tears from rolling down my cheeks, as I knew that my son had little hope to survive. But hearing from Pastor Tow that one should have faith in God, I prayed very hard to God to restore my son, who was suffering from lack of blood. My husband phoned Pastor and asked him to come and baptise my son. God restored my son. Praise the Lord!

I was a Muslim until 1960. Pastor Tow and Ah Chai came to my house and told me about the Lord Jesus Christ. I believed in Him and received Him as my own personal Saviour. I was baptised in October 1960 at Life Church.

Before becoming a Christian, my husband made me kiss the Cross before I went to bed, and follow the rituals of Roman Catholicism. In my heart there was no peace. Life at home was miserable. My husband often spent his time drinking with his friends. Now I thank the Lord for saving him too and for his giving up of alcoholic drinks. I am glad that I became a Christian for we are now a happy family.

Praise the Lord that we can open our humble home for the Jurong Children's Bible Class so that my children and I can learn more about the Lord Jesus Christ."

Mrs Chandra, a Malay woman, was Muslim. She is the first Muslim to receive Jesus Christ in Life Church and has ever since firmly stood her ground against every threat to this day. The Chandras' eight or nine children have all believed and are baptised. In fact the Saturday Children's Bible Class was started for the purpose of catechising their children. From that small beginning has sprung a Jurong Church and Sunday School, and a Tamil Church movement!

Deacon Robert Ong and Mt Carmel

The second avenue of Gospel outreach was opened in Redhill Estate, one mile from the pastor's Tiong Bahru flat. It was opened at Deacon and Mrs Robert Ong's flat at 220B Redhill Close on their own initiative. Eio Eng Hua, the first co-worker with Deacon Robert Ong, reported the very early days of Mount Carmel in *Bible-Presbyterian Annual*, (Volume V):

'Mount Carmel,' the latest branch Sunday School established by the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, was inaugurated on 4th December 1960. It was founded by Deacon Robert Ong who, being moved by the Holy Spirit, offered his home to be used as a "base" to combat the superstition of idol worship in this hill area by the teaching of the Gospel. Almost directly opposite Deacon Ong's house stands a Chinese temple. The proximity of this



Deacon Robert Ong with Sunday School children

temple to our deacon's house led us to give this Sunday School the name "Mount Carmel," which should remind you of Elijah and the prophets of Baal.

Before Mount Carmel was "officially recognised" as a branch of Life Church, Mr Ong had himself been running a Sunday Class consisting of a small group of children. Sad to say, owing to the great disparity between their ages (4-14), our brother found it difficult to prepare lessons that were suitable for all. In the course of time a few lost interest in their studies and consequently drifted away. But was Mr Ong discouraged? Never! He prayed for someone to assist him in this Gospel work which he felt the Lord had entrusted to him. True enough, his prayers were answered, for not long afterwards I was requested by the pastor to help him form a Sunday School at Redhill. I accepted the call prayerfully, and started work on the following Sunday.

As the School grew not only in numbers but in maturity, it was Eio Eng Hua who felt the need of a worship service for the teenagers. From this organised worship had sprung what was called Mount Carmel Gospel Mission at 446 Lengkok Bahru since 1967 and thereafter Mt Carmel B-P Church.

Building Operations at Gilstead Road Begun

When at long last news of approval of the building plans was announced, it rang like a wedding bell to the whole congregation waiting for the bride. Rejoiced the editorial of the *Malaysia Christian*, September 9, 1961, "Our happy voyage to Gilstead Road, for five years in preparation, has begun!" \$1,758 was offered in one day at the receipt of this glad tidings.

The building contract was awarded to Messrs W K Tham for \$173,600. The contractor donated back \$3,000 "in thanksgiving to the Lord." The total costs, however, amounted to \$300,000. This included the land price, earthfilling, piling, plumbing, sanitary and

electrical installations, furniture and fittings, etc, etc. But the eye of faith was not dazzled by the staggering figure, nor the ear of trust embarrassed by that regular monthly phone call for payment of from ten to fifteen thousand dollars. As “the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail” (I Kings 17:14), the Lord sent just enough to tide us over, from month to month. Now, once the building operations started and the contractor’s fees were paid in time, the superstructures of both College and Church rose “like bamboo shoots after the spring rains.”

For being paid on time all the time, the happy Contractor remarked to the pastor, “The God of your Church is greater than the God of other churches.”

Rev Contento at the Double Stone Laying Service

By April 28, 1962 the foundation stones for College and Church were ready to be laid. The Honoured Speaker for the stone laying was Rev Paul Contento of Vietnam. Standing under a red-and-white banner, “Jesus Christ Himself the Chief Corner Stone” (Ephesians 2:20), the Lord’s messenger reiterated his faith in the founding of the Bible College and exhorted the Church to send her sons to the School for training. He hoped that a Moody or a Wesley might some day come forth from the halls of the College.

At the double ceremony, Elder Heng Mui Kiah presented the trowel for the laying of the Life Church foundation stone, which reads in English and Chinese: “This stone was laid on the 28th day of April in the 1962nd year of our Lord for a witness that the members of this Church as lively stones are built up a spiritual House to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Christ Jesus.” The trowel for laying the Bible College stone was presented by Elder Lee Tsu Hwai. The words in English and Chinese say: “This stone was laid for the founding of a Bible College for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ

in the Far East on the 28th day of April in the 1962nd year of our Lord.”

Opening of Far Eastern Bible College



In no time September 17, 1962 arrived, the date of FEBC's opening. Although the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions was not able to send missionary teachers, the principal launched out by faith with three students and with Mr Peter Ng Eng Hoe, BD, ThM, just returned from USA, as his assistant. Of other helpers on the faculty, special mention must be made of Dr G C Inches, an Australian medical missionary who took time off to teach Church History. Dr Inches was also regular pulpit supply to Galilee Church.

Those who could not teach but loved the College gave liberally to the Building Fund, while others offered furniture, refrigerator, crockery and other useful household utensils. While it is true to say that God was our only source of supply, it is also true that He has chosen His children as channels of His bounties.

Dedication of the New Church

The red letter day of Dedication of the Church was scheduled for Saturday, February 16, 1963 4 pm. Measuring 50-by-116-by-26 with an eighty foot bell tower and spire (the \$1,300 bell was offered by two sisters and ordered from London by Chan Choon Keng through United Engineers), the new Church stood a new land mark over the approaches to Newton Circus on the Bukit Timah side. How joyful the Rev John A B Cook would be were he still alive, residing at what was once 1 Gilstead Road, to see the projection of the humble beginnings he had made at Prinsep Street and Upper Serangoon in 1883.

For this historic and memorable occasion Bishop D A Thompson, Chairman of the British Consultative Committee of the International Council of Christian Churches, was invited to officiate. On the day of Dedication a crowd of six hundred thronged the Church grounds by 4 pm. The pastor made the Call to Entrance whereupon Elder Heng Mui Kiah presented keys to the Bishop who opened the Porch Gate and Main Door to the strains of Gloria Patri by the Congregation. Mr Ng Eng Hoe called the people to worship which began with the singing of “Come, Thou Almighty King.” The pastor offered the Invocation and this was followed immediately by Zion Church Choir singing “The Church’s One Foundation.” After a Word of Welcome, Dr Tow Siang Hwa presented a Report on Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. After the Report, Elder Lim Khng Seng read the Holy Scriptures—I Chronicles 29:9-18. The Presentation of Thankofferings was made through the Deacons to the strains of an Anthem of praise in Chinese by Chin Lien Bible Seminary, Miss Leona Wu directing. Rev Quek Kiok Chiang gave the Offertory Prayer. As the setting sun cast its slanting rays above the words “O Send Out Thy Light and Thy Truth” arching across the pulpit, the Congregation sang Psalm 43 from which the simple Prayer is taken. The sermon was delivered by Bishop Thompson at the close of which the Life Church Male Chorus sang, “Brighten the Corner Where You Are.”

The Act of Dedication followed. Bishop Thompson said:

Beloved in the Lord, we rejoice that God has moved the hearts of His people to build this house and the Far Eastern Bible College to the glory of his name. I now declare this building to be known as the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church, and on behalf of the congregation dedicate it to be set apart for the worship of Almighty God and the service of men. Let us therefore solemnly dedicate this place to its proper and sacred uses. . . .

Finally all the ministers and the people in a final, solemn yet joyous act of worship chanted Psalm 84, culminating with the benediction pronounced by the visiting Bishop.

The Dedication of the Church was followed by a week of lectures in the morning under the auspices of Far Eastern Bible College, and Gospel Meetings at night. This week of spiritual feasting was crowned with a Rally of International Christian Youth-Malaysia with the showing of the film “Light in Amsterdam,” being a record of the Fifth Plenary Congress of the ICCC meeting in Amsterdam, August 1962.

Out of FEBC Springs a Church in Inland Malaysia

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity” (Psalm 133:1). This oneness in Christ extolled by the Psalmist not only gives succour to weaker brethren, but also power to co-workers. This oneness of mind gave them many hours of delightful fellowship in discussing the Kingdom of God. When the days of the Bible College’s first academic year were drawing to a close, on June 15, 1963 Rev Ng and Rev Tow felt burdened to pay a visit to Temerloh in the heartland of Malaysia. The purpose of their visit was to bring together several like-minded believers whom the Lord had settled in Mentakab and Temerloh, Pahang State, to raise a Gospel witness.

The reason for raising such a witness was twofold. First it was felt that although there was a Church at Mentakab, it was part and parcel of a denomination that had avowedly promoted the Ecumenical Movement. To join this church or to continue supporting it would be contributing to a cause that denied the Lord. Second, the starting of a new English Gospel witness at Temerloh (six miles from Mentakab) would expedite the extension of God’s Kingdom in this unchallenged hinterland of Pahang.



Temerloh Gospel Centre

It was agreed that this Gospel testimony would be an autonomous effort with the view of establishing a more permanent local church according to New Testament pattern. The founding members of Temerloh Gospel Centre comprised Dr and Mrs Tow Siang Yeow and their three children; Dr and Mrs Ng Eng Kee; Dr (Miss) Hooi Siew Hua. The Gospel Centre was to be housed at Dr Tow's quarters at Bukit Angin, Temerloh, and would run a Sunday School with a regular service. With hearts overflowing, the founding members decided on an early inauguration on July 7, 1963.

Having three zealous medical doctors to lead the Centre, and with Life Church supplying the pulpit once a month through the pastor and his associate, Temerloh became an instant success. To strengthen the stakes of the new work Ivy Tan, FEBC's first student, was sent by train to conduct DVBS during the Christmas vacation. One year after the DVBS, a letter was received from a young man thanking his teacher for imparting him the Word of

salvation. “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, . . .” (Isaiah 55:11).

Ten months after the founding of Temerloh Gospel Centre, Dr and Mrs Tow Siang Yeow received orders to transfer to Malacca. At this time the Sunday School according to the *Malaysia Christian*, May 9, 1964, had reached a regular attendance of 45. Together with the worship service the Sunday School was moved to Taman Bahagia where Dr and Mrs Ng Eng Kee were settled.

Although Dr Tow had left Temerloh, Life Church continued to supply the pulpit. In the meantime other Christian professionals were transferred to Temerloh who gladly joined the testimony. By August 1966, a half-acre plot of land in the centre of Taman Bahagia was purchased for \$9,500, and in two years a \$35,000 Church Auditorium was built.

The instant success of Temerloh was due in no small measure to the zeal and diligence of the founders, and to that liberal spirit imbibed from St Paul that we should by all means save some. For the Gospel’s sake, Bible-Presbyterians were willing to cooperate with the Brethren denomination. And though Temerloh Gospel Centre is now affiliated to the Gospel Halls, Lifers have no regrets. We can say with the apostle, “and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice” (Philippians 1:18).

Chapter VIII

PERIOD OF TESTINGS AND FURTHER OUTREACH, 1965-71

As we entered the third seven of years, the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore had multiplied to seven in this order: Life, Zion, Faith, Galilee, Sembawang, Mt Carmel, Jurong. As for ordained ministers, apart from Tow and Quek the two senior pastors, there were added Rev John Grauley, missionary of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, and Rev Philip Heng who had returned from study in the States in 1963. The latter was to become assistant pastor both at Life, and Galilee the newly established branch at Pasir Panjang on the West Coast. Simultaneously, Far Eastern Bible College was augmented by these two new co-workers.

“With Christ on the Mount”

As Church and College grew in strength and numbers so was their vision widened. For the annual Life Church camp, 1965, it was now planned to hold it the first time outside Singapore—Cameron Highlands! “With Christ on the Mount” was the theme chosen for this time of refreshing. The speakers were Rev John Grauley and the pastor. Deacon Joshua Lim was Camp Master.

The response to this offer was most enthusiastic. Fifty campers signed up including Mrs Tow Keng Chuan of Cheun

Kwang, who though Chinese-speaking came of her own accord, because she had found good company in Mrs Nancy Tow, the pastor's wife. "Uncles" of the Church generously loaned their vehicles for the use of the campers, which consisted of a brand new VW Kombi, a new Volvo and a Holden.

Since Cameron Highlands is 400 miles from Singapore, the Campers were obliged to break journey midway. Malacca and Muar were the halting points for the night because here free accommodation was available. First, from Dr and Mrs Tow Siang Yeow with their spacious government quarters, and second from Madam Lim Siew Guat with her newly completed houses. In view of the fact that the pastor had a preaching appointment with Muar Easter Sunday evening, thus obliging him to stay on for the night, Mrs Tow and the children would not ride in his Kombi but in the VW Sedan she was wont to drive herself. The reason for not travelling with the pastor was that both she and Mrs Tow Keng Chuan desired to spend the night in Malacca with the relatives. O, mysterious working of predestination!

On the afternoon of the next day, while the caravan was heading steadily towards the foot of the mountain, two by two, suddenly the Volvo broke ranks and overtook the Kombi, the leading vehicle driven by the pastor. This started a sort of race between the VW Sedan and the Volvo. A surge of anxiety gripped the pastor's heart as he was overtaken! For, it was drizzling heavily, and the road was wet. Sure enough, the pastor's premonition turned into stark, brutal fact! Turning out of Bidor, he saw a commotion ahead. The Assistant Pastor waved him to stop. O no! It was the VW Sedan, the "Jesus Saves" car, in the ditch! Head-on collision with a truck! Mrs Tow Keng Chuan in the left front seat, Mrs Nancy Tow and Le Anne in the left back seat, were taken! As by a whirlwind, in a lightning flash! Paul Tsao at the wheel suffered internal injury. The other survivor, Lily, had a broken thigh and bloody head lacerations.

The deceased being gone, what must be done at once was treatment for the living. Paul and Lily were rushed to Ipoh with Miss Ong Soo Kheng tending. Praise the Lord, an immediate operation on Paul saved his life. Lily's leg was plastered up and her head stitched.

“With Christ on the Mount” was the message of the Highlands Camp. The message was now spoken not by the living, but by the dead. Hearts were melted, washed by tears of sorrow, mingled with love and repentance. “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21). “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him” (Job 13:15). The dead spoke again when the three caskets bearing them were brought back to Life Church, Gilstead Road. At their combined funeral service on 22 April 1965 conducted by Rev Quek, Rev Ng and Rev Grauley, and Mr Jacob Fung of Grace Cantonese Church, no sermon was needed. The mountain theme song, “Is not this the Land of Beulah,” was sung by the fifty campers to the sympathising tears of the thousand mourners.

*To that mountain above the moon
Ye have soared away too soon!
But my God has called you to rest,
And His will for us is best.
Blest are ye who died in the Lord,
And have found rest from your labours,
And your works follow after you
One by one we say adieu!*

Was this triple tragedy sheer accident? Could it not have been avoided? One very close to the beloved deceased, being thus perplexed, took pains to find out the facts of the case. She came to the conclusion that “God has worked in a mysterious way for a higher purpose, to His Glory.” Thus wrote Mrs Lim Siew Yong in the *Malaysia Christian*, 8 May 1965:

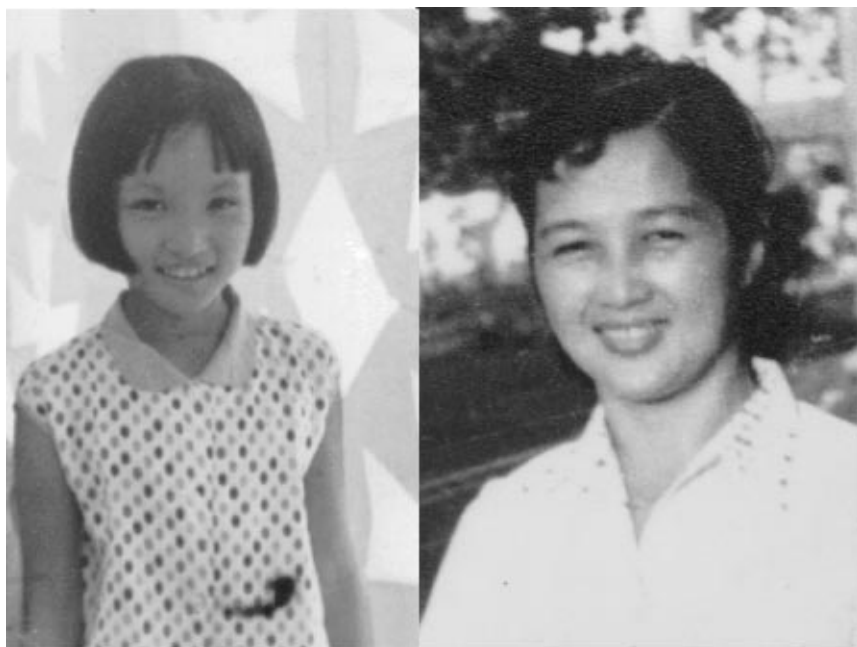
The recent departure of my sister-in-law Mrs Timothy Tow, my niece Le Anne and my aunt Mrs Tow Keng Chuan was most sudden and unexpected. The news of their deaths came as a great blow. I was struck speechless and I could only weep and mourn over the great loss.

Before this, there were revival meetings in Church. Then there was Good Friday Night Service. I still remember seeing Mrs Tow smiling from a distance after the Good Friday Night Service. This was followed by the Easter Sunrise Service and the Easter Service in Church. Surely God would protect them and keep them safe on their journey to and fro, I thought.

In my deep grief, I was determined to find out the cause of this seeming calamity. After much praying, observation and interviewing, I have come to realise that what had happened was all through God's mysterious guiding power.

From many Church members I learnt that Mrs T Tow has been preparing months ahead for this Camp. According to Mrs Lim Giok Kim, she had to line up before dawn to get her leave at K K Hospital a few months earlier. How delighted she was to get her leave, for immediately thereafter she drove to Mrs Lim's house to tell her of the good news. A few weeks before Camp, she had packed her clothing. She took much pains to tend the garden in the Church grounds. She spring-cleaned the whole parsonage before leaving. On Easter morning, at 4 am, she was the first to get up to play Easter chimes on her radiogram, while preparing to attend the Easter Sunrise Service.

My beloved niece Le Anne always reminded me of a beautiful, smiling and sweet-natured girl. She never once lost her temper, although my clumsy son often broke her toys while playing with her in the parsonage. Of late, she often asked the Bible College students about Heaven, and was very eager to know what Heaven was like. She also



Le Anne and Nancy

expressed her earnest wish to be in Heaven, since the beauty of Heaven is unsurpassed by earthly splendour. Her father also testified that she read her Bible regularly every day, and was very obedient and helpful in the home.

My beloved aunt, Mrs Tow Keng Chuan, was a zealous and prayerful Christian worker. The nurse who attended to her at my sister's clinic described to me her last visit to the clinic. Mrs Tow Keng Chuan complained of sleeplessness for more than a week, but she felt no ill-effects during the day. The nurse took her temperature and tested her blood pressure, but found her to be perfectly normal. Mrs Tow Keng Chuan was pleased to know that she was in good health and was therefore fit to go to the Bible Camp. She also expressed her desire to sit in the same car with Mrs T Tow, so that she would have someone to talk to. Before

leaving the clinic, she cheerily told the nurse that she would go and pray for everybody on Cameron Highlands.

From my account of the three loved ones, we can be assured that they were all prepared to meet our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Indeed, God had prepared a much more wonderful place for them than Cameron Highlands, for before reaching their destination, their course was changed heavenwards.

Mrs T Tow, Le Anne and Mrs Tow Keng Chuan had received the greatest thrill of all, for “in the twinkling of an eye” they found themselves ascending into space, soaring past the sun, moon and stars, and finally they found themselves coming face to face with our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, what a glad and blessed reunion, for they were also reunited with many other loved ones and friends who had gone before them. While on earth they had been practising the Camp Song “In Beulah Land.” Now would be the joyous and perfect moment to sing the chorus, “Is not this the Land of Beulah? Blessed blessed land of light; Where the flowers bloom forever, and the sun is always bright.”

During the Easter Church Service on April 18, I was deeply moved by the Scripture passage read by my big brother, Rev Timothy Tow: (I Corinthians 15:51-58). “Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. . . .” This Bible Passage gives us the greatest consolation while we are yet on earth. Death is conquered by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To the worldly-minded people and heathens, the recent motor accident is a great tragedy, but we Christians think it otherwise. God has worked in a mysterious way for a higher purpose to His own glory. He wants us to be prepared for eternity, and not to be engrossed with worldly

pursuits. Whether it be death or the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, are we ready to meet our Saviour face to face?

The conclusion of Mrs Lim that it was God who had worked in a mysterious way for His own glory is right. For our Lord has promised his children protection to the last hair on their head (Matthew 10:30). Such a great calamity could not have happened without His decretive permission. Now that it had happened according to His will for His own glory, good must come out of it.

According to the writer's knowledge, one young soul received Christ up the mountain the night of the accident. Back home in Singapore, another who was spending a night with Koh Kim Hiang in Deacon Joshua Lim's house, was called to serve the Master. When the phone rang to break the news of the tragic deaths, this person, groaning with tears, surrendered to the Lord. His name is Goh Seng Fong. Immediately after this he joined the Bible College.

Many other testimonies of lives changed and consecrated were given by Rev Grauley, Anna Tan, Dr Ang Beng Chong, Tow Siang Kwang in the *Malaysia Christian*. Suffice it to mention another testimony, the consecration of Mr and Mrs Charles Tsao, parents of that young driver of the fateful car. Ever since this bitter-sweet experience (their son was saved by the operation) they have given themselves to the Life Church Chinese Service. Indeed there was much talk at this time for a Chinese Service. The sequel to the motor accident precipitated the Chinese ministry to fruition on the 15th anniversary of the English Church, October 1965.

Fifteen months after the Highlands episode, the Lord gave the pastor another helpmate in the person of Ivy Tan, a founder-member of Galilee and first graduate of Far Eastern Bible College. They were joined in holy matrimony by Rev Quek Keng

Hoon and Rev Quek Kiok Chiang at a simple service at Gilstead Road, 16 July 1966.

A Dissentious Spirit Crept into the Church

Hitherto, the witness of separation from modernistic unbelief and ecumenical apostasy had received full support of the Church. However, when evangelical leaders like Dr Billy Graham began to fraternise with the apostate ecclesiastical powers for the sake of “cooperative evangelism” and the pastor pointed out the unscripturalness of such a relationship (II Corinthians 6:14-18), one or two Session members who differed with the pastor introduced a dissentious spirit into the Church, the first time in eighteen years. On and off the problem of Dr Billy Graham cropped up while the Far Eastern Beacon serialised J A Johnson’s book on Billy Graham—“The Jehoshaphat of Our Generation.”

The opposition in Life Church Session against the pastor increased from one or two dissenters to several when the pastor published two news reports in the Far Eastern Beacon, November and December 1968. These reports were written in the capacity of special correspondent of *New Life*, Australia’s Christian Newspaper, to the Billy Graham-sponsored Asia-South Pacific Congress of Evangelism, Singapore, November 5 to 13, 1968. These reports were made in a sincere spirit for fairness and accuracy and were well received by the *New Life*. The editor-in-chief thanked his pastor-correspondent in a letter enclosing a cheque, “Please accept my grateful thanks for your helpful and informative reports of the Singapore Congress on Evangelism. I was most grateful to you for your kindness in undertaking this assignment on our behalf, and can assure you the reports aroused much interest. As may be expected we had one or two letters from Congress delegates who were not in agreement with some of your comments at the conclusion of the second article, but in view of

the difference of viewpoint amongst evangelicals on such issues as separation from apostasy, this is not surprising.”

The spirit of dissension against the uncompromising, separatist stand of the Church manifested itself in a new building project. When the plans for a three-storey Church-and-College extension were approved in February 1968, the same Session members, who were unhappy over the Billy Graham issue, opposed the launching of building operations. This opposition was of no avail, for God’s good hand was upon His own work. A sister’s gift of \$50,000 to this \$120,000 project was a sign of the Lord’s approval.

One year after building operations began, this new Kindergarten and College block was dedicated by Rev Jason Linn, founder of Zion Kindergarten and veteran missionary to Dyak Borneo.

The brotherly love that once so sweetly prevailed over the Life Church tree like the sparkling dew of morning all but evaporated. The climax of dissension was reached when the assistant pastor was invited to preach at a Methodist Church in early July 1969, for which campaign he appended his name to a letter cyclostyled on paper bearing the letterhead of the said Methodist Church. This gave the impression that he was in close fellowship with a Church in the Ecumenical Movement. Controversy over this matter flared up at Presbytery. There the question of whether a Bible-Presbyterian minister, when invited to preach by a Church in the modernist Ecumenical fold had a duty to warn against the dangers of Ecumenism, was discussed. The opinion of the Presbyters was about equally divided, resulting in a contention so sharp that they left in bitterness of spirit.

Since the relationship between the pastor and the assistant pastor and certain Session members was stretched to breaking point, the pastor decided to take five months’ vacation leave away

from Singapore. At this juncture a double invitation from Dr Lynn Gray Gordon, General Secretary and Rev Howard Carlson, missionary in Bethlehem of the Independent Board, came to him to spend that vacation as a short-term missionary to Israel. This was gladly accepted and seen as an act of God's deliverance. Accordingly, the pastor and his wife and little daughter Jemima left Singapore 28 July, 1969 for the Holy Land. The love for the pastor and family, however, was manifested by a big turnout to wish them Godspeed.

The five-month vacation spent in the Holy Land as a short-term missionary was perhaps the most fruitful period in the pastor's life. While discharging his duties as a missionary, he found time to join Rev Howard Carlson in a five-month "Ulpan" Hebrew course at the American Institute of Holy Land Studies in Jerusalem. What he considered a prize from the Lord, however, was the composing of songs and verses inspired by "walking today where Jesus walked". These songs and verses, illustrated with Howard Carlson's photographs, were printed into a book with a sister's help. Thousands of these sent to the United States are an extension of the Gilstead Road Testimony.

Seventh Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches, 1970

The pastor and his family returned to Singapore in time to open the Seventh Assembly of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches as he was its president.

The Seventh Assembly was preceded by a Bob Wells Gospel Crusade and a Springmann Recital. In all it became a ten-day marathon. The dates were: 17-19 April evangelistic rallies at Gilstead Road with final night at the National Theatre; 20 April Springmann Recital; 21-26 April the Seventh General Assembly, incorporating International Christian Youth.



FECCE 10th Assembly (8-12 June, 1981)



Life Church Auditorium that seats 750

The Bob Wells Crusade, under the chairmanship of Dr Tow Siang Hwa, and supported by a Hundred-Voice Choir conducted by Mr Ma Lin Hang was a resounding success. Three thousand packed the National Theatre on the final night. Inclusive of those won at the Gilstead Road meetings, a total of 300 souls were counselled.

Owing to the all-out exertions made upon the Bob Wells Crusade, the Seventh Assembly of the FECCE unfolded rather as an anti-climax, so far as attendance at the evening meetings was concerned. But God overruled. The Lord spoke powerfully through Bob Wells again in his message on “Evangelism and Preservation of the Christian Faith,” and with equal unction through the President of the ICC.

Can a Church and College in Singapore receive the Lord’s servants from twice seven countries and not be blessed? History has shown how the little Life Church at Prinsep Street, after



Calvary B-P Church (Jurong)

hosting the FECCC Third Assembly in 1956, began to spread out to Sembawang and Serangoon Gardens in a mighty sweep.

Branching Out to Jurong Town

On the very eve of the Bob Wells Crusade, April 1970, an half-acre of land in Jurong Town was approved by Government for a Church-and-school complex through the contact of the Crusade Chairman. The new Promised Land was actually bigger—27,000 square feet.

As soon as this lease was granted, an Eleven-man committee to develop Jurong for Christ was formed with Dr Tow Siang Hwa as chairman.

A name for the new church in Jurong Town was chosen after a frank debate. Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church has since been on the lips of many, not only in our Bible-Presbyterian Church,

but throughout the whole Christian Community in Singapore. Interestingly, some have addressed Calvary B-P Church as a Baptist Church! The motto for Calvary is excellently chosen from the words of the cross-bearing Christ, “Not to be ministered unto but to minister” (Mark 10:45).

Under the dynamic leadership of Elder Tow Siang Hwa, a Building Fund was launched.

Apart from Life Church apportioning sums out of her general fund and commemorative offerings to the Calvary Building and Lifers making individual offerings, mention must be made of the enthusiastic response of the Faithfuls (members of Faith Church), with many a widow’s mites.

Messrs Chan Kui Chuan, architects, drew a three-story education block joined to a two-storey church auditorium with a big social hall downstairs, patterned after Zion. The contract was awarded to Messrs Leow Seng Nam for the price of \$287,600.

On Saturday 14 August 1971, a Ground Breaking Service was held on the site at Corporation Drive and Tao Ching Road before a gathering of about 300, including the curious children of Jurong. All the brethren of spiritual Israel came to swell the ranks of the new tribe and offer congratulations. A notable item in the service was the presence of Mr Woon Wah Siang, Chairman of Jurong Town Corporation, who welcomed the Church on the Government’s behalf.

The new Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church with its three-storey annex was completed before the 22nd Anniversary of the mother Church, at the cost of \$330,000, inclusive of furniture and fittings. Calvary became the third big church in the Presbytery, after Life and Zion.

Chapter IX

PERIOD OF MULTI-DEVELOPMENTS AT HOME AND ABROAD, 1971-1995

In Chapter VIII it is stated that as the B-P Church of Singapore entered the third seven of years, it had grown to seven in this order: Life, Zion, Faith, Galilee, Sembawang, Mt Carmel, Jurong. By the end of the third seven of years (ie 1971) there sprouted from Life a big offshoot in Calvary. This increased the movement to a total of eight Churches.

From the beginning the pattern of church growth was set by Life the mother Church. According to the fourfold programme of the Great Commission, each B-P Church is its own missionary society. Missions, as the reader will notice in Chapter VI, "Period of Laying Foundations" (1950-57), is the first step in the Church's advance. The pastor of Life Church was also her missionary. Lifers from the beginning to this day have not restricted her pastor's missionary outreaches as some Churches (Western or Oriental) have to their own loss.

Nor is the B-P pattern concentrating just on missions. We follow up the remaining three emphases of the Great Commission, viz evangelism, baptism and indoctrination. We fully carry out the fourfold Commission and we have seen how this has resulted in the fastest and healthiest Church growth. As it were, by geometric progression.

Now, let us see how each of the eight “first-line” Churches has developed both at home and abroad the next 24 years, from 1971-1995. Let us begin with Calvary, the last to come up, but happily, accordingly to the proverb, “the last shall be the first.” She has set a fast pace to the rest of B-P Churches to follow.

What was the secret of Calvary’s phenomenal growth? The secret was the man whom God had appointed to this work. Heading Calvary was Elder Dr Tow Siang Hwa, but he was a busy professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in the University of Singapore. To give more time to the flocks entrusted to his care he resigned from his professorship. This is Elder Tow’s testimony:

I. CALVARY **(by Dr S H Tow)**

It was the decision of a lifetime, leaving the chair of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the University of Singapore, a prize won by years of study, struggle and sacrifice. “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ” (Phil 3:7). It was no easy step, but when God calls who can refuse?

“Have you any regrets leaving the world of academics?” This question came from well-meaning friends long after the “bridges had been burnt.” There is no better answer than to quote again the words of the Apostle in the next verse of Phil 3:8, “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord” for whom I have left the glamour of academics, and do count it but a small thing, that I may serve Christ.

Serving my Lord has been surpassing joy and satisfaction unknown in the world of academics, or politics, or business, or anything else. To you who are still in pursuit of the world, I say, consider the Lord Jesus and enter into His service. He will more

than compensate for any loss, and reward you with the greatest gain.

That step taken in 1969 traces back to an event in 1938 during the revival meetings of Dr John Sung. He appealed for “whole life consecration,” presenting our bodies a “living sacrifice” unto God. My response was instant and joyous. God’s servant laid his hands on my head and prayed for me, in much the same way that the Apostle Paul put his hands on Timothy (2 Tim 1:6). That “gift of God” has been in me since that day, and its stirring was decisive 31 years after, . . .

The work of Calvary in Jurong so flourished that starting another Church in the Western sector of Singapore was a logical progression. At Pandan Gardens a bigger sanctuary with a four-storey annex forming a quadrangle was built in 1979. It has more room for a kindergarten and a youth hostel and living quarters for the Church staff. Like Jurong it caters also to the Chinese-



Calvary B-P Church (Pandan)

speaking, but that which is outstanding in the ministry of the Pandan congregation is its running a Sunset Gospel Hour every Sunday evening at 6 pm at which many from other B-P and non-B-P Churches have come to attend and are attending. God has mightily blessed the preaching of the Word and the defence of the faith through this evening service. From Pandan has flowed also a life-giving stream of Bible-reading note-books known as RPG (Read, Pray, Grow) into all the world.

Dr Tow Siang Hwa heads the Pandan group while the *Jurongites* come under the associate ministry of Rev James Chan Lay Seng, one of FEBC's earliest graduates. The Chinese Service at Pandan is headed by Rev Tang Wai Kay, a Chin Lien graduate, and the Jurong Chinese Service is under Dr Cheng Wei Nien. Since 1992 Rev Quek Suan Yew another FEBCer with further training in the States has joined Calvary as Associate Pastor.

Petaling Jaya, Malaysia

Calvary Jaya B-P Church is a 30-year dream come true. Ever since the founding pastor of the B-P Church, Rev Timothy Tow, spearheaded our evangelistic thrust into south Malaysia in the early fifties, the ardent dream was for a B-P Church in Kuala Lumpur. The way God worked it out is beyond human contrivance.

A restless spirit moved a young man Daniel Chew to uproot himself from Kuala Lumpur to search for purpose in life in Singapore's Armed Forces. In camp he was invited to Calvary B-P Church in Jurong where the Lord saved him. His conversion led to the entire family's salvation and the starting of an occasional home service in Kuala Lumpur in 1980.

A proposal by the young man to Calvary's Session resulted in the establishment of a regular service in a rented shophouse in Damansara Jaya for seven years (1984-1991). On September 13,

1991, Calvary Jaya moved into its present premises in Jalan 17/1, Numbers 6 and 7, Petaling Jaya. The acquisition of the “twin properties” in circumstances so strange and extraordinary merits recalling and renewed thanks to God.

Towards the end of 1988, at the prompting of the Interim Committee of Calvary Jaya B-P Church, we were constrained to inspect a disused and badly vandalised dwelling house at Number 7 standing on 13,600 square feet of land. A vacant lot (Number 6) of 10,500 square feet separated it from the nearest at Number 5.

The obvious plan of action was to acquire both properties: Number 7 with the bungalow (built-up area 5,200 square feet) and Number 6 for a car parking facility and a buffer between Number 7 and Number 5, our nearest neighbour. Approaches to the estates agent for Number 6 met with a “cold shoulder” response.

Our Interim Committee was undeterred by the rebuff and tracked down the owner who, wonder of wonders, accepted our offer of RM18 per square foot (to the agent’s extreme



Calvary Jaya B-P Church

annoyance!). The house at Number 7 was under receivership with a bank. It had gone for two auctions which failed to meet the reserve price (RM820,000 in 1986). To our astonishment the bank agreed to sell at RM560,000!

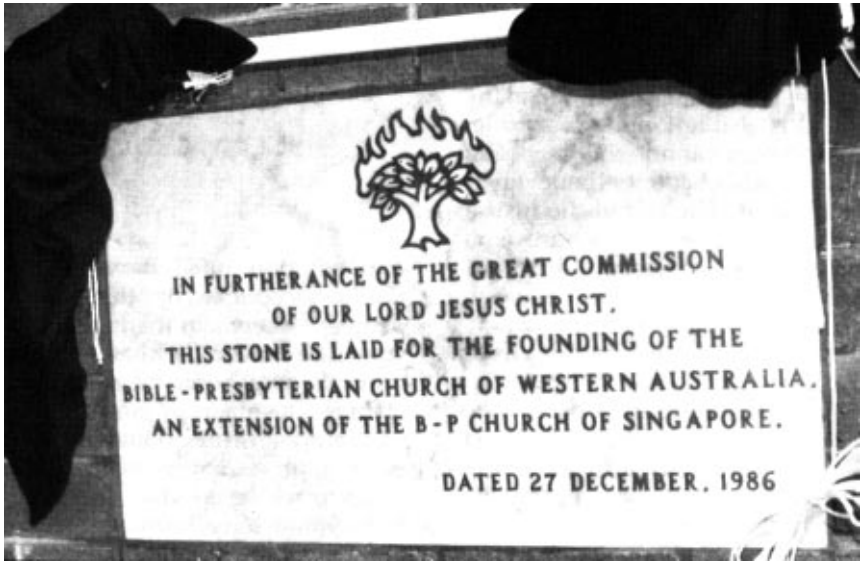
In the third week of February 1989, all parties had agreed to the two transactions and were ready to proceed. On February 20, 1989 my wife and I flew to Kuala Lumpur to execute the deal on behalf of Calvary Jaya. Weighing on our minds was the question: Will all parties keep their word, and be present for the signing? Our prayer was, “Lord, this is Thy work. We are mere instruments in Thy hand. May Thou cause all involved parties to keep their word, and appear at the time appointed.” Lo and behold, in under two hours all the signatories had “signed and sealed” the relevant documents of sale! The 10 per cent deposit was paid on the spot, and two valuable pieces of real estate were “in our pocket.”

The acquisition of Number 7 at RM560,000 (32 per cent below the original reserve price) was a “once a lifetime” bargain. A major reason was the condition of the house. (Every door practically had been broken or torn down, the windows and most fixtures and fittings had disappeared). The garden was a literal jungle, with plants growing from the compound into the house! Here we gratefully acknowledge the loan of S\$450,000 from Life Church toward the purchase.

Today, house Number 7 stands beautiful and majestic, the admiration of passers-by and neighbours across the street. This then is the story of Calvary Jaya as recalled by one who witnessed it from the beginning even to this day.

Western Australia

The Bible-Presbyterian Church Of Western Australia (BPCWA) is a thriving Gospel church with weekly attendances exceeding 300 in two congregations: English and Mandarin,



pastored by young and able undershepherd Rev Peter Chng, graduate of Far Eastern Bible College, who is effectively bilingual. Some events in life leave a permanent and unforgettable impression. My first encounter with Mr Seethor Weng in August 1985 was such an event. It was after delivering a Sunday Morning sermon in Pandan that Mr Seethor came up to me and speaking in Cantonese said, “Our family is emigrating to Perth. When our house is ready will you come and start a church?”

Of all unlikely persons God moved him, a recent convert, non-English speaking, not highly educated, to take the initiative to offer his house for a church. It is needful for me to chronicle this event, from which all subsequent events of BPCWA radiate. Coming out of the blue, as it were, the proposal took me completely by surprise. But the Spirit of God moved and the call was accepted without hesitation. The rest is history. I can do no better than reproduce excerpts from Calvary’s “Australia Missions Report” dated November 1, 1986.

1. The first (preparatory) meeting of BPCWA was held on February 9, 1986, at the home of Mr and Mrs Seethor Weng. Almost 100 persons were present. Through Mr Robin Tan's leadership, the Melville City Council Lesser Hall was rented and became our venue for the next ten months.
2. The B-P Church of Western Australia was inaugurated on February 23, 1986, with 92 persons attending. Dr S H Tow delivered the message, "Sow in tears, reap in joy." Thereafter the ministry of the Word was sustained by
 - a. a speaker's pool (Dr Tow, Rev Timothy Tow, Rev E Paauwe)
 - b. occasional invited preachers from non B-P churches eg. Rev John Hunt, and
 - c. the use of VIDEO SERMONS from Calvary when no preachers were available.

Rev Timothy Tow ministered there for five weeks, May 11 to June 8, 1986.

3. In May 1986, a church property on 19,000 square feet of land in Mt Pleasant on the Canning Highway, consisting of a Sanctuary with adjoining Fellowship Hall was purchased for A\$140,000. The entire sum was underwritten by a sister of Life B-P Church.
4. At the time of writing (May 15, 1986) Calvary's Session was in the process of sending Mr Mark Heath to Perth as our missionary pastor to shepherd the flock in the new church. He has since been ordained pastor of BPCWA.
5. Renovation works for the church were carried out during September-December 1986. The Dedication Service (by Rev T Tow) was on December 27, 1986, followed by the first Bible Camp (December 29-January 3, 1987). The speakers were Rev T Tow and Rev E Paauwe.

6. Mr Robin Tan, chairman of the Protem Committee, provided outstanding, capable and vigorous leadership. Dr S H Tow, Founding Pastor, gave overall care and guidance (by some 150 phone calls in the first year) and frequent “flying visits.”
7. Financial support from Calvary’s Missions fund supplied the bulk of its needs until 1989 when BPCWA became fully independent. In subsequent extensions, timely help was rendered by Life B-P Church in S\$100,000 gift and S\$50,000 loan.

Melbourne

In 1985 one of Pandan’s members Mr Loke Tat Luen emigrated with his family to Melbourne. Before he departed, I urged him to start a Gospel witness in his home. Shortly after arrival in Melbourne, he and his wife Julie began to have Christian meetings at their home in Wheelers Hill.

At Easter 1986 the Lord sent Rev and Mrs Paauwe from Adelaide to strengthen the hands of the Lokes. A Sunrise Service was conducted to which Christians were invited. Following this the Paauwes conducted a week’s Daily Vacation Bible School. These two events marked the birth of Bethel B-P Church.

Following this the Lokes requested us to help set up the work on a more permanent footing. My wife and I made a visit in April 1986. As a result a regular Sunday Service was established. Special mention must be made of the Paauwes taking the overnight coach rides from Adelaide (May 1986 to October 1987), a period of 18 months to maintain the pulpit.

As the members increased in numbers the church moved across the street to the home of the Choongs. By December 1987 another move became necessary. Through Mrs Julie Loke’s good offices, permission was obtained from the Principal of Clayton



Bethel B-P Church

Primary School for the church to have access to its many rooms and facilities.

Between December 1987 and May 1988 Bethel was greatly blessed by the ministry of Rev and Mrs Bob Phee. It was during this period that the Youth Fellowship was started, and helped to flourish.

In October 1988 the Lord opened a way for us to procure a church complex in the suburb of Oakleigh at a cost of A\$750,000. The date of settlement was October 1989. Bethel came into possession of a beautiful sanctuary with a capacity of 500 seats, two outhouses and a dwelling house, situated on 26,000 square feet of land.

Particular mention must be made at this point of the immense help rendered by Life B-P Church, Singapore,

- a. in sending their Pastor Timothy Tow and Mrs Tow to minister at Bethel during FEBC's vacations in two successive years, 1989 and 1990,
- b. in loaning their Elders Chia Kim Chwee and Khoo Peng Kiat and Associate Pastor Patrick Tan, and
- c. in loaning Bethel a large sum, interest free, to purchase a 5-acre piece of land.

Our Staff Worker Mr Lim Hai Seng, graduate of FEBC (DipTh) joined Bethel in June 1988. With his wife Poh Lin, they have been the mainstay in looking after the church complex at Oakleigh.

Elder and Mrs Khoo Peng Kiat have been regular visitors since 1988. Elder Khoo is a tower of strength, a much appreciated supervisor and helper to Brother Hai Seng in many ways. Besides he preaches regularly, as often as there is a need, and also takes the Friday night Bible Study and Prayer Meeting, the Basic Bible Class, counselling sessions, visiting the sick and infirm, and other pastoral duties.

In November 1992 Bethel's congregation was blessed with the services of a Resident Pastor, Rev Brian Harper, for eight months. During his brief ministry he proved to be a warm-hearted and most caring "shepherd of the flock." Due to differences in the practice of Biblical Separation Rev Harper resigned his pastorate at the end of June 1993.

Batam, Indonesia

An Indonesian Chinese Christian, Mr Tan Nam Siang, came to Batam to set up a business. Being an ardent Christian, he was burdened by the fact that there was no fundamental church in Batam and prayed that a Sunday worship service could take place in his newly acquired shophouse. By God's grace, the call came to Calvary B-P Church to help him fulfill his prayer. The first Sunday worship service was held in his shophouse on October 22, 1989. Preacher Pang Kok Hiong preached the first sermon and there were twelve adults present. Soon, news began to spread and more Chinese Christians came to join. However, Mr Tan's shop was too small.

The Lord led us to buy a new shophouse nearby. On October 20, 1991 a group of about thirty people moved in to occupy their



Batam B-P Church

new “promised land.” Up to this time, apart from Ibu Roska (now Mrs Roska Choi) there was no full-time worker looking after the flock.

Ibu Roska is an Indonesian lady graduated from FEBC serving in a Korean shipyard as Life Church missionary to Batam. She was kind enough to help out. Apart from her, speakers on Sunday had to come from Singapore by rotation.

In March 1992, the Lord called Kiantoro, another FEBC graduate, to come to Batam as our full-time worker. The number coming to worship continued to grow and new converts were added to the Church by confession of faith and baptism. Now the congregation consists of one-third indigenous Indonesians and two-thirds Chinese Indonesians. The language used is Indonesian interpreted into Mandarin.

The Lord provided again. A local developer donated a piece of land of 1,576 square meters in the middle of the new Batam Centre to build a two-storey church building. The whole project was completed by March 1994. Inauguration service of the beautiful church building was held on August 7, 1994. On this piece of land surrounded by parks, sports complex, shopping centre and a large housing estate stands this magnificent church building that can seat 300-400 people.

Government officers from Medan, Pekanbaru and Batam were present. The opening ceremony was conducted by Mr Gultom from Medan, following which, the developer Mr Ruslan officially opened the door of the church. The service was chaired by Mr Kiantoro and the message was preached by Dr Tow Siang Hwa. Among the guests were Rev and Mrs Paulus Mak from Kalimantan, Rev Siregar and Mr Haposan from Medan, a choir from the Presbyterian Church of Tanjung Pinang and a few from Singapore.

Tengah (Singapore)

The Bukit Panjang Gospel Outreach (BPGO) was started in June 1988 as a ministry of Calvary B-P Church at Pandan. The main objective was to minister to the Bukit Batok/Bukit Panjang neighbourhood. By January 1994 it was ministering to forty families in Bukit Panjang, Choa Chu Kang, Bukit Timah and Bukit Batok. BPGO had functioned with the anticipation that the Lord would bless Calvary B-P Church with another outreach in the north-western sector of Singapore. By God's grace, the Lord opened the door to the Shalom Chapel at the Tengah Air Base. In the light of the government's target to increase the public housing there to 474,000 people a proposal to start a church was submitted by Deacon Boaz Boon to Session on January 13, 1994.



Calvary B-P Church (Tengah)

The Session was in favour of the proposal and Pastor, Dr S H Tow, and the elders surveyed the site. Meetings with the Military Christian Fellowship which administers the Chapel, and Shalom Baptist Church which currently uses the facilities only on Sunday mornings, were arranged and agreements were made with all parties concerned.

By God's appointment, Calvary B-P Church (Tengah) was inaugurated on Lord's Day, August 7, 1994. The Church worships at 3.00 pm each Lord's Day with a current average attendance of between 50 to 60.

Saipan—Backdoor to China

The 1989 massacre of Tiananmen was God's instrument diverting Calvary's first full-time missionary from China to Saipan. Four trips to China in the eighties had convinced Pang Kok Hiong of the crying need of his countrymen for the Gospel.

After exploratory trips to Saipan (once with Rev Timothy Tow and Dr Cheng Wei Nien), the Pang family set out in March 1992 to found a new work among some 10,000 Chinese factory workers from the mainland.

Labouring together with the Korean Presbyterian Church's Rev Lee Man Yuel, this instant mission field brought a rich harvest of souls. Each Lord's Day some 200 Chinese mainlanders flock to the Korean Church to hear God's Word from Rev Pang. In the three years, 1992-1995, about 400 have come to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and confessed Him in baptism.

Many have responded to the call to serve the Lord in China. Intensive Bible indoctrination classes are conducted nightly after normal working hours. Returning to China these recent converts have started some twenty house church groups.

Pastor Pang nurtures the new believers with audio tapes, Bible study books and an assortment of sound Christian literature, besides making periodic visits to China to continue training, encouraging and nurturing the groups, as well as to baptise more new converts.

Saipan is our Gospel backdoor to China, free from the harassment of communist cadres and spies. Our God is able and we must be faithful.

Toronto, Canada

In 1994 Calvary Canada was founded in Toronto, another Gospel door which the Lord was pleased to open. Twenty years earlier God had saved Daniel Chew, whose untiring efforts won the entire family from idolatry to the Lord. The father Mr Chew Fook Wah became our first Chinese preacher in Calvary Jaya B-P Church, Kuala Lumpur.

Following the home-going of Mr Chew, the family emigrated (by God's evident leading) to Toronto. After six years' preparation, Daniel received a clear indication from the Lord to begin an independent, Bible-believing, fundamental, premillennial witness, in the spirit of the Twentieth Century Reformation Movement.

January 1994 saw a group of twenty souls meeting regularly for worship, prayer and study of the Word, under the shelter of Calvary Baptist Church, Brampton. The Pastor Denis Gibson warmly received the group and provided spiritual instruction in the study of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

In April 1995 Calvary Canada, with the help from Singapore, acquired its own premises in Mississauga, in an office-condominium complex, with 5,500 square feet of usable floor space. Purchased at a cost of C\$378,000 (\$68.70 per square foot), the restructuring, renovation, and equipping brought the total cost of the entire project to \$700,000.

In 1995 (May-July) Rev and Mrs Timothy Tow nurtured the group in the faith for nine Lord's Days. Daniel Chew, having been an elder of Calvary Singapore since 1980, is God's appointed leader. Supervisory Pastor S H Tow provides continual advice, direction and encouragement from Singapore, besides making periodic visits for the ministry of the Word.

II. JURONG

(by Rev Burt Subramaniam)

The church was founded in the home of Mr and Mrs Chandra by Rev Timothy Tow on 8 October 1960. Sister Ivy Tan (Mrs Tow) and brethren from Life, Galilee and Hume Heights gave themselves to this ministry. Among those baptised at that time were sisters Janet (Mrs Burt Subramaniam) and Sinamah.

The coming of Rev and Mrs Paauwe in 1974 gave new life to the church. With the help of the Far Eastern Bible College students they evangelised the neighbourhood aggressively and helped establish the believers in the faith. During that time many came to be saved. Among them were brothers Seah Eng Chee, Freddy Yong, Yap Beng Shin, Burt Subramaniam and Mani who all went on to study at FEBC. An FEBC student, Mr Brutus Balan, greatly burdened for the Indians living in that vicinity, established Tamil Sunday school classes for the children and adults. The members also went to Kulai Oil Palm Estate (Malaysia) on a monthly basis to conduct Bible classes.

On 25 July 1977, it was decided by the church committee that the committee should be enlarged to include a borrowed Elder (Elder Edmund Tay), and a student pastor. Upon the departure of Rev and Mrs Paauwe to Korea, brother Burt Subramaniam was appointed the pastor of the church. By this time the ministry of the word was being conducted in three languages (English, Malay and Tamil).

The idea of a separate Tamil Worship Service was first suggested by brother George Kutty on 5 July 1977. At that time the committee felt that it was not the right time.

Bethlehem Jurong B-P Church

In January 1979 we had to move out of the Chandras' home. Calvary Jurong BPC graciously allowed us to use their church premises. To avoid any confusion we added "Bethlehem" to our name. On 29 July 1979, brother Burt graduated from FEBC and became the full-time pastor.

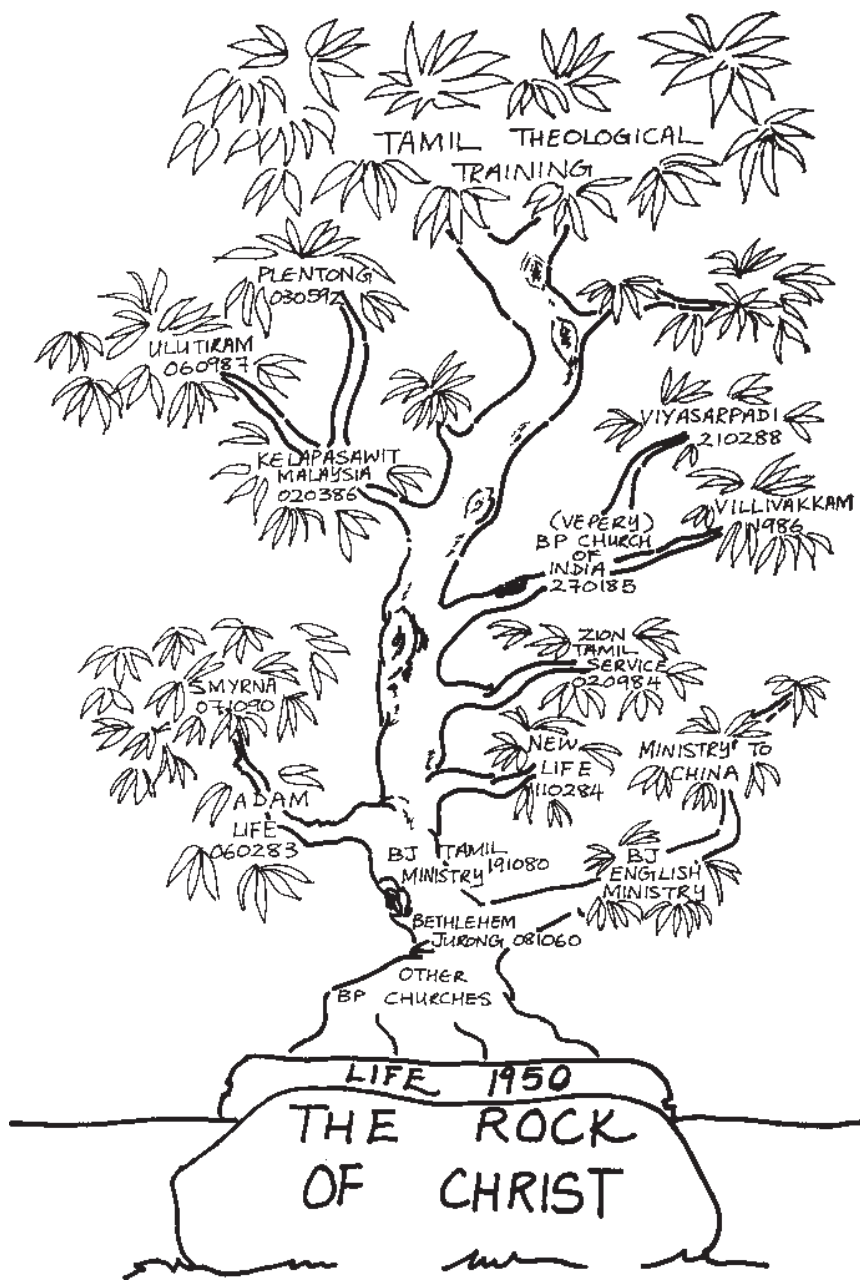
On 19 October 1980, upon the availability of Bro Yap Beng Shin to pastor the English section (8 souls), the Tamil ministry was launched. At our first Tamil worship service we had only 13 members. On 23 October 1983, pastor Burt approached the B-P

Synod for directions for the Tamil ministry with the view of establishing more Tamil churches. At that Synod meeting it was decided that the Tamil ministry should be solely under Bethlehem-Jurong with the English speaking churches providing whatever assistance they could. So at Bethlehem-Jurong it was decided that instead of working towards a church building of our own we should concentrate on starting Tamil services at different corners of Singapore. Brother Burt was ordained to the ministry by the Synod on 30 October 1983. Elder Edmund Tay agreed to be the borrowed Elder of the Tamil section while Elder Khoo Peng Kiat gave himself to be the borrowed elder of the English section.

The Tamil B-P Churches

Then, the time was just right for the Tamil ministry. There was an awakening in the B-P Churches for missions at that time. Different B-P Churches showed enthusiasm to accommodate Tamil churches in their premises. Hence, the beginning of New Life, Zion and Mt Carmel Tamil services. The churches were also very willing to share their leaders. Thus we had Elder Mahadevan (Life), Elder Prasad (New Life), Elder Gan (Zion) and Elder Joseph (Sharon) serving the Tamils. At that time brother Wan and some other FEBC students came across some Tamils living in Kampong Chia Heng. Bethelhem-Jurong helped organise them as Life Tamil service. Brethren from Life Tamil Service later went on to establish Smyrna Tamil service at Sembawang. Brother Mani gave himself to the ministry in Malaysia. Calvary Jurong became an ideal place for the Tamil ministry because of the many foreign workers taking residence in and around Jurong at that time. Some of these came to know the Lord and gave themselves to the gospel ministry. Through them came the B-P Church of India. Churches were also established in Johor, Malaysia.

At the Leaders Conference (5-9 September 1988) held at Awana Country Club the Tamil church leaders met and decided



that the Tamils should be self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating in order to remain true to the Lord. Being unable to solve certain doctrinal controversies the Synod was dissolved on 30 October 1988. The churches became autonomous. Elders Edmund Tay and Joseph continued their support for the Tamil ministry. In April 1990, Bethlehem Jurong B-P Church (English and Tamil) had to move out of Calvary Jurong. Galilee B-P Church welcomed us and made us feel at home. Thus the ministry continued unhindered.

These things led the Tamil church to seriously work towards the three “S” principles. A Theological Training programme was started to prepare the lay leaders. Pastors Mani and Wan were ordained to the Tamil ministry on 30 December 1990. Now they have given themselves to establishing independent Tamil churches. Rev Mani is the pastor of all our Malaysian churches. Rev Wan is pastoring Adam Life and Smyrna congregations. Now, three Pastors, two borrowed elders, eight deacons and one deaconess are all working together as one body. The churches are expected to be more fruitful in the days ahead.

Rehoboth Chapel

Rev Timothy Tow started the building fund from the very beginning. Offerings collected during the weekly worship services were but a few dollars. As Life BPC was supporting the building fund, the amount continued to grow.

With the departure of Rev Paauwe, the building fund came to a standstill. However, by then we had \$27,000 in fixed deposit with Golden Castle Finance. It was agreed then that this amount be shared by both the English and Tamil sections should they decide to become two churches.

The idea of having a Bible-Presbyterian Tamil Centre was first put forward in 1987 by Pastor Wan Khwen Lam. Pastors



Rehoboth Chapel

Mani and Burt also felt a similar urge during that time. Thus, this idea was presented before the Lord. In their weekly prayer time the pastors continued to pray over this matter. When the conviction continued to grow, the pastors then shared the idea with the leaders and members who also committed this item to the Lord in prayer. As the churches were struggling to meet their monthly financial needs this was the best thing they could do. From then on, praying for a Tamil Centre became a regular item of the church prayer meetings. The people believed God for the impossible.

The people started giving out of their poverty. The three Singapore Tamil congregations (Bethlehem, Adam Life, Smyrna), designated ten percent of their monthly offerings for the Building Fund. Old newspapers were collected and sold. Members also sold Christmas cards and other items on a regular basis to raise funds. The funds were slowly but steadily coming.

The pastors started looking for a suitable land. They went all over Singapore to find the Promised Land though pastor Burt wished we could get a place in Bukit Timah, in particular, near the Adam Road Junction. Because this was most central for all the Tamil congregations. Moreover, buses from north, south, east and west crossed this junction. The poor Indian people who depended on public transport could easily get there. The pastors looked at numerous buildings and lands. Nevertheless, these could not meet the URA requirements for a change of use. Little discouraged, the pastors left the matter to the Lord in prayer. Again that was the best thing they could do.

On 4 November 1991, Mr and Mrs Davis approached pastor Burt and requested that he earnestly look for a church site. They pledged their full support. The next day pastor looked at the Straits Times and found Number 1 Dunearn Close for sale. The pastors, elders, deacons and the Davises liked the place. The agent, Mr Lim, assured us of the possibility for a change of use. The owner, Madam Irene Wei, was willing to reduce \$25,000 from the asking price and was also willing to wait until we obtain the approval from LDU and URA. Before other churches closed the deal we entered into an option with the owner. The price was fixed at \$1,250,000. Messrs Perumal Jeremiah and Partners were appointed as our solicitors.

People started to give sacrificially. Some gave all their savings while others gave their treasures (jewellery, watch, sewing machine, etc). One sold the house he had booked for a more urgent need. Fasting and prayer sessions were held on weekly basis.

On 8 January 1992, the Minister (LDU) gave us his approval for the church to purchase the property. On 29 January 1992, the URA gave their approval for the change of use. Golden Castle Finance agreed to give 75% of the purchased amount on loan, repayable over 20 years. Mr Michael Lim of Calvary Jurong B-P

Church agreed to be one of the guarantors and pledged his full support for the project.

On 25 February 1992, the dream of the Tamil Church came true. God has done the impossible among His people. Unworthy though we may be, yet the Lord blessed us out of His mercy. On Good Friday (17 April 1992) when the five congregations (Bethlehem, Adam Life, Smyrna, Kelapa Sawit, Ulu Tiram), came to gather for their first worship in the new premises it was a time of celebration. Tears filled many eyes.

The name “Rehoboth Chapel” is befitting to this house of God. In Genesis 26, we read of Isaac’s difficulty to have a well of his own. When it became possible, he named the well Rehoboth and said, “for now the LORD hath made room for us; and we shall be fruitful in the land.” Each of the three Tamil congregations has moved 3 times before coming to this place. Here the Lord has made room for us. And from here we pray that we will reach out to the lost and be fruitful.

We covet your prayers to accomplish all that God has for us in the future. May the Lord continue to use us as His instruments to reach out to the lost. May the Indians receive the Living Water from the well of Rehoboth Chapel.

III. MOUNT CARMEL

(by Rev Daniel Chua and Elder Teo Choo Soo)

Our Humble Beginnings

On 27 July 1958 a young man gathered some children in an HDB flat at 220-B Redhill Close and taught them a Bible lesson. For more than 2 years all by himself, he continued this class every Sunday afternoon in his home. The attendance was between 6 and 12. With much optimism he called it the 220-B Redhill Close

Sunday School. His name is Robert Ong, a member of Life B-P Church.

A visit by Rev Tow, pastor of Life Church, introduced Eio Eng Hua, to this work. Together they organised the work and the Mount Carmel Sunday School was born on 4 December 1960. The name was auspiciously given by Rev Tow, for opposite 220-B stood a Chinese Temple on a hill. He saw this as reminiscent of the challenge between Elijah and the Baal prophets on the Biblical Mt Carmel. As more children came to Sunday School, Ang Beng Chong and Paul Choong joined the team. These four were the steadfast pioneers.

Soon the sitting room in the flat could not contain them all. An empty wooden hut with bigger space in nearby Henderson Kampung attracted the pioneers' attention. On 22 July 1961 the Sunday School moved there and stayed 2 years before returning to 220-B when it became possible to use another room beside the hall. Joy in service compensated for the inconvenience of dislocation.

Teenage Service Started

About this time it was noticed that many older boys and girls were dropping out because the Sunday School alone could not meet their needs. A worship service was felt to be needed. On 1 November 1963, a Teenage Service was started. The Lord's hand of blessing was seen when more secondary school students came. But there were setbacks too. Our vociferous singing led neighbours to complain, and the Sunday School was ordered to quit 220-B.

Rumah Tinggi

But praise be to God who has already prepared a way! Robert Ong had meanwhile moved to another flat at nearby Rumah Tinggi. At his invitation, we moved there for more space and growth on 31 October 1965. In a matter of two years every nook and corner of his house was again filled, with Sunday School classes overflowing to the bedroom and kitchen, while teenagers packed the hall. The next stage of our development had arrived.

Lengkok Bahru

By July 1966, the leaders realised that worshipping in flats is only a temporary solution. Robert Ong once again went in search of bigger premises and came across an unoccupied corner-unit shop house in Lengkok Bahru. Is the Lord beckoning us to move again? Yes, indeed! On 26 April 1967, we took possession of #446 Block 61 Lengkok Bahru. Our gestation period was completed when Mt Carmel Gospel Mission was officially inaugurated in May 1967 with 50-60 teenagers.

Growth, Consolidation and Expansion

Our next 18 years at Lengkok Bahru (1967-85) represents a period of growth, consolidation, and expansion. The group mushroomed to 125 by 1971 as a result of Bible studies, tracting, evangelism, action groups, and tuition for the neighbourhood.

When the use of a home at Margaret Drive was offered in 1971, group enthusiasm compelled us to grab it. An outreach was launched and named Hebron. Four years later in 1975, another group forked out to pioneer Mt Hermon in Telok Blangah. All three groups share a unique relationship that may be described as “one church in three places.”

But two outreaches within such short period drained the “mother church” of many key leaders. Resources and personnel were spread thinner each time we expanded. Morale was also affected as old friends parted ways and social readjustment to newcomers were required. The Carmel worship service hovered for many years at 130-140. But after starting a second service in 1979 to overcome congestion, it rose steadily to almost 200 by 1981.

Road to West Coast

At about the same time that we started our second service, Mt Carmel was served notice by the HDB to cease religious worship at Lengkok Bahru. Our leaders recognised that our days at the shophouse were numbered. We decided to embark on the path of searching for land to build a permanent church. After many unsuccessful bids and negotiations, a parcel of land in West Coast fell on the laps of Mt Carmel and Bible Church (our co-bidders) in 1982.

The successful co-tender of the land united Carmel, Hebron and Hermon to put their hearts and pockets together to raise half of the \$3.6 million required for the land and church building. At the same time, many rounds of discussion about our growth patterns led finally to the conclusion that Mt Carmel would not amalgamate all three groups into one big church when the building is up. Each group will instead retain its own service and identity, while the new building would be considered a fresh outreach.

Overwhelmed in Clementi Bible Centre

On 17 March 1985 when Mt Carmel moved into West Coast (Clementi Bible Centre) for our first service, a core-group of 84 moved in while the rest remained. But our attendance on that day



Clementi Bible Centre

was an astonishing 221 adults, with another 69 children! By December that year, attendance had swelled to 423. There was no time for a settling-in period, nor was there room for a stage-by-stage development of ministries.

Mt Carmel had to adapt to a breathtaking pace from the word go. An attractive, well-structured worship programme with systematic pulpit teaching was prioritised. Many ministries were started “on demand.” A multiple-staff pastoral team and increasing administrative staff was seen as necessary to cope with the burgeoning congregation and sudden influx of newcomers. The sudden surge in growth convinced us that it is time to launch our third daughter church. In October 1988, 38 new-generation Carmelites went back to Lengkok Bahru to launch Mt Horeb Gospel Mission.

The Temple, Community Centre and Shopping Complex

But the numbers kept flowing in. A second service was started in Clementi Bible Centre (1991), together with a Chinese and Filipino Service. In 1992 when we celebrated our Silver Jubilee year, attendance had reached in excess of 550, and by the beginning of 1995 it has crossed 630.

The story of Mt Carmel started with the church facing a temple at Redhill. Here in West Coast, the story is the same. A huge temple is coming up across the road from where we are to serve as a reminder of the spiritual battle we are engaged in. But that is not all. Just directly opposite us lies a community centre, while a mega shopping complex lies next to us. Do these represent the social diversions and the spirit of consumerism plus self-indulgence that can rival the vibrancy of our faith? We thank God for placing these visual reminders for us. But by the grace of God, we seek to at all times maintain a faithful witness worthy of the prophet Elijah at the original Mount Carmel.

Hebron (by Elder Dr Ang Beng Chong)

In 1970, a couple in Galilee B-P Church had just obtained a flat of their own in Margaret Drive. In thankfulness to God, they offered it for use on Sundays for Christian outreach. Mt Carmel took up the offer. We had a few gospel meetings in the home, and then a Sunday School was started in January 1971. In April, an afternoon Worship Service was started. The flat sufficed as a niche for the preaching of the gospel to the neighbours. The neighbours' children came and they in turn brought their friends. Every Sunday, Vincent and his wife (our Galilean hosts) would clear away all their living room furniture, and the Hebronites would come and set up their planks on stools.

The leaders in charge of this outreach were Elder Ang Beng Chong and Dn Philip Lee. There was a core of faithful ladies, whose diligence has borne the fruit of today. Among them are Deborah, Soh Moy and Soi Fun who are still fervent for the Lord in Hebron. Stephen Kuan, trained from FEBC, was another stalwart.

Being a “house church,” the group made a few moves in the seventies. In 1974, Hebron moved to Holland Drive, and then to Shepherd’s Drive in 1976; both were homes of Philip and Caroline Lee. In between they also had to use Su Dental Surgery in Wishart Road for periods when the homes were not available. In January and February of 1975, Hebron made two attempts to bid for rental of shop space for Worship in Henderson Road and Holland Drive respectively. We did not succeed then.

In 1975, Hebron formed their own Administrative Committee with Elder Ang as Chairman and Miss Priscilla Ng as Secretary. In 1977, with an average attendance of 77, the Development Committee felt confident enough to work towards full church status.

Clementi Outreach was started at the home of Richard and Angeline Ang in Clementi Avenue 2 in 1978. It was a combined Hebron-Carmel effort with Pastor David Wong and FEBC student Seah Eng Chee at the pulpit. In the same year Mr Michael Chung, an FEBC graduate, was appointed Hebron’s Assistant Pastor for one year. When the government restricted home church groups, Hebron and Clementi merged and moved to rented premises in Ebenezer Chapel in Minden Road. There we started our Children’s Club.

In 1982, Mt Carmel and Bible Church succeeded in their joint bid for a parcel of land to build a church in West Coast Road. As this was going to be a phenomenal project financially and manpower-wise, Hebron committed to support Carmel in this and

shelved our plans to register as an independent church. When Ebenezer was closed for renovations in 1983, Hebron was sheltered by Calvary Pandan B-P Church. We worshipped first in the luxury of the airconditioned AVA Room and then in the Sanctuary. The congregation continued to grow as more friends were brought to the Lord. As our young members got married there was also an increase in children.

In 1985, Clementi Bible Centre in West Coast Road was completed and we moved in under Carmel's auspices and occupied an afternoon slot for Worship and Sunday School. Worship attendance grew to an average of 130.

In 1988, Hebron elected her own Deacons and Deaconesses into the Session. This replaced the Administrative Committee we had till now, but we were still an 'adjunct' to the Carmel Session. We thank God for Carmel who allowed us to exist as an appendage and yet we had all the liberty to develop in our own way.

Between October 1988 and June 1991, Rev Peter Eng (again a graduate from FEBC, and ordained in 1989) was Hebron's pastor. During his term our Missions policy was established, and a few Mission trips were made to explore the possibility of adopting a certain place for our mission field. Our Constitution was also prepared at this time. The Church staff was enhanced with the addition of a Chinese staff worker Miss Sandra Chay and a full-time secretary Miss Chan Lai Chun. Mrs Ang Hong Hai became full-time Church Counsellor.

Our Chinese Service was launched in October 1990 with 20 members and has by now doubled the number. We are grateful to Rev Thiam Fook Peng from Faith B-P Church who has been regular at the pulpit and serves Holy Communion every month.

In 1989 the leaders in Mt Hermon initiated a fellowship of the leaders of the Mountain Churches. They named it "LOMCH" and



Hebron B-P Church

included the leaders of Mount Carmel, Mt Hermon, Mt Horeb and Hebron; all offshoots of Carmel.

In October 1991, the Registry of Societies approved our application for Registration as a Church.

Knowing that our sojourn in Clementi Bible Centre is not permanent, Hebron began searching for a place to build God's house again. After several failed attempts, in His own good time, our God allowed us to be successful with our bid for a piece of HDB land. All the land parcels and buildings we missed in the past seemed very good, but this one in Choa Chu Kang Street 52 surpasses them all. Situated on flat land, it is surrounded by high rise flats now already occupied. There will be a school on each side of the new church. Imagine the harvest potential with nearly a quarter million population out there, and the two schools to reach out to. There is not another church in the neighbourhood.

Our members are thrilled at this God-given privilege and are doing their best. We truly thank God for the overwhelming response from our mother of B-P Churches—Life B-P Church. Mt Carmel is fully supportive also. Many sister B-P churches have shown support.

We take on the Choa Chu Kang Project in partnership with Hermon B-P Church. Hebron is spearheading the project and Hermon has representatives in all the planning.

As our Lord launches us out on this great task, He is also providing the means and the people. We now have two pastors, Pastor Aow Kong Yow and Pastor Eddy Lim. Our Young Adult Fellowship is active and fervent for the Lord. We have one couple in the Mission field. Another couple have moved to work in Hong Kong and serve in Medical Mission in Mainland China. Two couples are serving full-time in Christian organisations in Singapore. Whilst the financial task of building God's house is big, we will not neglect to continue spreading the gospel far and wide.

God-willing we will be in Choa Chu Kang by end 1995. Pray that we will be prepared to reach out to the lost and build lives for Christ always.

Hermon **(by Elder Lui Chiew Yee)**

The early morning rain brought along a refreshing coolness that Sunday when I boarded the bus for church service. It was October 6, 1975 and I was on my way to join the first worship service of the Telok Blangah outreach. The freshness of that morning coincided with the fresh feelings of a new beginning for the small group of Carmelites as they made their way towards the newly completed housing estate from their respective homes.

The Swee Pharmacy

Fourteen adults and three children gathered amidst shampoo bottles and pharmaceutical products to worship the Lord in a little shophouse called the “Swee Pharmacy”. The speaker was Rev John Ting. The place was also the home of Elder and Mrs Tan Kim Ping, “Swee” being the middle name of Mrs Tan. That morning, the history of Mt Hermon began, under the name of Telok Blangah outreach, an offspring of Mt Carmel at Lengkok Bahru.

I was a relatively young Christian then, and like the rest of the group, was full of zeal and enthusiasm to reach out to the residents of this new town estate at the foot of scenic Mt Faber. For about six months we laboured at tracting and door-to-door evangelism in the neighbourhood.

Sometimes the history of the church can be influenced by economic factors of the community. Owing to poor business response to the pharmacy, we had to move our worship location out of Swee Pharmacy to Su Dental Surgery, at the fringe of Telok Blangah estate. This dental clinic belonged to Mrs Ang Beng Chong. From May to December 1976, we held our regular worship service there in the waiting room.

Sharon Vale

Realising the need for a more permanent base, we rented a pre-war house in the neighbouring Pasir Panjang district and started tuition classes there for children in the neighbourhood. The place Number 3 Boon Leat Terrace we renamed Sharon Vale, presumably after the Sharon of old, west of Ephraim and Manasseh which was noted for its rich pastures (Isaiah 65:10) where flocks can find rest and restoration.

With active evangelistic efforts led by Daniel and Joanna Rouillard, we grew in numbers and in deeper fellowship with one another. As God's work prospered Satan was quick to cause disruption. A letter of complaint was published in the press about residential premises in Boon Leat Terrace being converted for commercial and religious uses. (For example, there was a medium who lived a few doors who had turned his house into a temple).

Back to Telok Blangah

As an interim measure, we moved out of Sharon Vale in December 1977 into the home of Mr and Mrs James Chua at Telok Blengah Heights for Sunday worship while continuing our tuition classes at Sharon Vale. This move put us back into the heart of Telok Blangah where we started. Our membership grew to about thirty-five by end of 1979.

At about this time, much adverse publicity was made in the press about house churches which subsequently resulted in the Government policy to discourage the use of HDB apartments for public worship. To avoid inconveniences which may arise, we moved from Telok Blangah Heights back to Su Dental. We worshipped there from January 1980 to April 1982. It was during this period that we started prayer meetings in the homes of members.

Home at Lengkok Bahru

After seven years and five different places of worship, we returned to the mother church to worship in the afternoon at Lengkok Bahru shophouse premises. Initially, we were unclear and unsure of the will of God in this strange move (other than the prospect that the tenancy of Su Dental may be terminated at that point). Before long, the real reason became clear—Carmel was successful in bidding for a church site at West Coast Road. After

Carmel's move to the new location, we were to carry on the ministries in the LB shophouse.

Two years prior to that, the beginning of 1983, saw a flurry of activities as the leaders of Carmel, Hebron and Telok Blangah congregations planned towards the Great Move and the subsequent transfer of LB ministries to Telok Blangah group worshipping at LB in the afternoon slot.

The Dew of Hermon

At this point of time it became clear that the Telok Blangah congregation needed a new identity, a new name. A new name also marks the beginning of a new phase, indeed a new chapter in the history of our congregation.

With the impending physical movement of members in Carmel and Hebron to the new church building and the “transformed remnant” remaining behind in LB, the need to preserve the unity in the Spirit in all three congregations was greatly impressed in the minds of the leadership.

It is with this back-drop of spiritual unity amidst physical separation that the name of Mt Hermon was chosen for the “brethren who stayed at Jerusalem.” Hermon was mentioned in Psalm 133 which started quite appropriately with “How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity . . .” and “it is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mt Zion” (Psalm 133:1,3).

So in August 1983, the Telok Blangah congregation took on the new name of Mt Hermon in anticipation of her new identity when the Carmel brethren join us to continue serving the Lord in the LB neighbourhood.

On To Boys Brigade HQ

On 17 March 1985, Hermonites, till then meeting in the afternoon, joined Carmelites in the morning to form the newly merged, 120-strong congregation.

At about the same time, it was perceived that there was a need to start some kind of Mandarin speaking ministry. During September 1985, a Mandarin service was introduced on Sunday afternoon. Most of those in this Mandarin service congregation were senior citizens from the Social Outreach Ministry.

Towards the end of 1986, there was an opportunity to rent a good-size hall from the Boys Brigade HQ (BBHQ) at Ganges Avenue, a few kilometres away, for worship purpose. This was appealing as it would relieve the physical limitations at LB and also allow the Mandarin congregation to use the more attractive morning slot there.

So in the early months of 1987, we moved once again out of LB into BBHQ. The premises being an old government school building were ideal for us to carry out our Sunday activities as the classrooms were used for teaching programmes and the hall served as the sanctuary.

The First-Born of Mt Carmel

While continuing the weekday ministries in LB and holding worship services at BBHQ, the leadership of Hermon discussed and decided on obtaining legal status as an independent church. In July 1987, we submitted our application to Registry of Societies. Eleven months later, on the 10 June 1988 we received a letter dated 6 June giving approval to our legal status—Mt Hermon B-P Church was born, and from the legal perspective as an independent church, the first born of Mt Carmel.

Soon after we obtained our legal status, we launched a search for a pastor to shepherd the flock. The Lord answered our prayers when He sent Pastor Ian Heng from Zion B-P Church into our midst. On 11 June 1989, Ian was officially elected as the first pastor of Mt Hermon B-P Church.

On the 4 November 1990, Pastor Ian Heng was ordained in a simple but meaningful ceremony by Rev Quek S H and Rev David Wong. This event marked the completion of the first growth cycle of Hermon as she now is a full-fledged church with legal standing and a full-time pastor.

(Read the latest about Hermon in her joint partnership with Hebron to build a Church Complex at Choa Chu Kang).

Mount Gerizim **(The Chinese-Speaking Daughter of Mt Hermon)**

Perhaps the least known of the “mountain” congregations of Mt Carmel, Mt Gerizim is nevertheless one of her offshoots.

When Mt Hermon took over the work at Lengkok Bahru in March 1985, the need was soon felt to start a Chinese Service. Many years ago, a Chinese Service had been started at Jalan Tiong in the home of James Lee. Carmel member Lee Yin Khuan and his team of co-workers had valiantly carried on the work till it had to close owing to the lack of manpower and response.

In 1986, a Chinese Service was started in the afternoon at Lengkok Bahru and given the name Mt Gerizim. Like her namesake in Deuteronomy 27:12, the congregation sought to be a mount of blessing to the people. Chin Lien Seminary student, Mrs Agnes Tan, assisted the pioneering work.

When Hermon moved to Boys’ Brigade Headquarters (BBHQ), Gerizim moved to the morning time slot. However, the work failed to grow. Dn Henry Lee who was assigned to oversee

the work said, “The attendances dropped to 10 and below. I wanted to give up. But if the Lord had opened the door, how can I close it?”

Rev Ian Heng, pastor of Hermon, shared the critical and urgent situation with Rev Kwan Yew Weng, pastor of Cana B-P Church, a Chinese-speaking daughter church of Zion B-P Church. Rev Kwan offered to take Gerizim under the wings of his church.

On 1 October 1991, Hermon gave the blessing and Gerizim was “adopted” by Cana with Dn Henry Lee, Peter Tng and their wives Siew Tee and Lizbeth as founding members. That Christmas saw 6 baptisms, and the worship service (by then at BBHQ) rose to the present strength of 30.

Today Mt Gerizim B-P Mission (as it is now called) is part of a group of Chinese-speaking B-P congregations made up of 200 members with their own property at Changi.

Mount Horeb **(by Mickey Chiang)**

The history of Mount Horeb B-P Mission started, and nearly ended, with durians. It was like this. After Mount Carmel decided to launch an outreach in early 1989, over 20 interested persons met at Robert Kee’s home at West Coast Park. And there we enjoyed a lovely buffet dinner with bags of durians as dessert, but getting the outreach started proved to be a thornier problem than the durians.

Many members of the Care Groups assembled at Robert’s place declared they were not ready to move out of Carmel. A few weeks later, another attempt was made, this time at Anthony Chin’s apartment just two streets away. Only three persons turned up; Pastor Albert Ong, Dns Chia Lai Fong (the official representative from Carmel) and I.

There was no catered buffet, no laughter, and no durians. The mood was very sombre. Everyone felt disappointed. It would have ended right there if someone had not remarked that whenever good work was being undertaken for the Lord, the Devil would be expected to do all he could to prevent it. Somehow that little remark changed the mood. Things returned to their proper perspective. We decided that even if no one else wanted to go to Bukit Merah we and our families would go. We all bowed our heads and prayed to God, confessing our inadequacy, turning to Him for strength and guidance, pleading for the hundreds of thousands of unsaved people in Bukit Merah, asking that His will be done.

A weekly prayer meeting was started, separate from Carmel's. Anthony was designated Chairman of the new outreach and Mickey the Secretary. Pastor Albert started a doctrine class (using Louis Berkhof's *A Summary of Christian Doctrines* as textbook) to prepare the two future leaders doctrinally.

Finding The Mountain

The next hurdle was finding a place to worship in. We hunted high and low, to no avail. But when things looked bleak, Mount Hermon B-P Church, our sister church, came into the picture. When Carmel left Lengkok Bahru for the new building in West Coast, she "bequeathed" to Hermon the shophouse where Carmel had met for 18 years. Hermon had since outgrown the premises and moved to the Boys' Brigade Headquarters at Ganges Avenue. The leaders of Hermon graciously agreed to let us use the shophouse on Sunday mornings and on one weekday night for our prayer meetings. To us it was heaven-sent.

Several names of biblical mountains came to mind as we thought of a name for our mission. Sinai, Ararat, Olives, Ebal.

Finally, we opted for Horeb, the other name for Sinai, and so was born Mount Horeb B-P Mission.

From the very beginning we had decided to meet needs in the Lengkok Bahru area. We knew that the Bukit Merah housing estate was an old one with an aging population, but we did not have the resources to undertake work among old folks. So we concentrated our pitifully meagre resources on the children. With boldness we advertised our new tuition classes.

Each student was extra-precious and the tutors made great sacrifices of their time, effort and even money. Some were themselves students at college or university, and the time they spent teaching could have been spent on their own studies, or earning pocket money by giving tuition to wealthier students. Cheang Kok Kheong reported what he saw when he visited one of the children's homes, "There was not even a table for him to study at. He had to sit on the floor to do his homework." For our tutors, helping a student in his studies meant giving him a table lamp to study by.

But the rewards were great. In 1990, a primary school student, Eddy, made a speech to the congregation on Teachers' Day. It was such a polished speech, full of wit and maturity, and worthy of someone much older. His tutor must have almost burst with joy. In 1991, the tuition class for PSLE students had a 100% pass rate. God was giving, through the Horebian tutors, a new chance, a new hope in life to students who previously saw red in their report cards and darkness in their future.

In 1990, the Horeb Mission set up a bookshop called the Horeb Good Book Shop and Management Centre. The Management Centre part was added on to allow the company to engage in a wide range of activities, like giving tuition, holding public lectures and so on. But basically, the Mission needed more space for the tuition classes, the newly set up Youth Fellowship

and the Sunday Club. The shop occupies two HDB shophouse units just a few doors away from the Mission.

We decided to go for a HDB shophouse. One day, it “so happened” that one of our members was in the HDB head office when he spotted a HDB notice calling for tenders for several shop units in, guess what, Block 61. Such a “coincidence.”

We counted all our available money, spoke to the mother church and made bids for two units. We had no idea how much to bid, so we prayed that we would not bid too low and lose to others, nor too high and waste the Lord’s money. When the bids were opened, ours was successful, by only \$100 above the next bid. How beautifully God answered our prayers.

The bookshop aimed at getting Christian books and literature into non-Christian homes, help Christians set up small Christian libraries in their homes and help theological students obtain books at low prices.

Thanks to the shop, the tuition classes and Sunday Club could expand. Later, a small room was used by mothers and babies during worship services. The YF met there too. God had provided room for growth in answer to our prayers, in a way we had never imagined.

But in 1991 dark clouds loomed over the bookshop. Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait had put the brakes on spending in Singapore, and one of the first things to be cut were non-essentials, like books. The shop went from profit into the bleak prospect of possible losses. We decided that it was not our business to sell books to Christians; we were an outreach and our task was to get Christian books, magazines and comics into non-Christian homes in Lengkok Bahru and Bukit Merah. So we scaled down the shop and scaled up the outreach. We had not lost money, for when we cleared our stocks, we recovered much of our initial costs.

After achieving worship attendances of over 80 adults, 1991 and 1992 saw attendances slide into the low 60s. Several members had gone overseas, a few returned to Carmel, some married and moved to their spouses' churches. It was a dry, worrisome time. And with evangelism concentrated on children, few new converts were coming in. But still, God gave us increase in a wonderful way: 15 lovely children have been born into the tiny Horeb congregation. Several more came in 1993. Every married couple wanting children was blessed with children. Horeb now has a small reputation as a baby booming church.

In 1991, Pastor Albert Ong relinquished his post to pursue doctoral studies at Queen's University in Belfast. The mission was left without a shepherd. Council members struggled to keep things going, by taking on pulpit preaching, counselling of ex-drug addicts and so on. But their efforts proved inadequate. The toll was heavy and more members drifted away. Most of the ex-addicts went back to drugs. It was a heartbreaking time seeing one after another fall. Many hours were spent with them, counselling, praying, persuading. Thanks to God, several went back into Christian half-way houses.

A few months later, feedback from the congregation showed that a pastor was urgently needed. This was formally confirmed in January 1992 at the Annual Congregational Meeting. In April, Samuel Goh became Pastor. Trilingual in Indonesian, Mandarin and English he threw himself into the Lord's work.

In September 1992, the Horeb Council decided to adopt two of Pastor Samuel's proposals for evangelising Bukit Merah: (1) to reach out to relatives, friends, neighbours and colleagues, and (2) to work towards a second Chinese-speaking congregation, since the majority of the people in the area are Chinese speaking. While members brush up their Mandarin and learn to witness in Mandarin, efforts will also be made to reach out to the English-speaking residents. This is the direction that Horeb will be going.

May this be in God's will and may He give it great success, for there are over 200,000 non-Christians in Bukit Merah. Please pray with us that many will be saved.

IV. SEMBAWANG (by Rev Bob Phee)

The year 1957 saw the birth of the Sembawang Sunday School. It was the first offspring of Life Church in its plan of gospel outreach. In January of that year, a group of young people from Life Church in the company of Rev Timothy Tow and Rev Quek Kiok Chiang started the Sunday School in the home of Mr and Mrs Seow Chong Pin at 95 Nemesu Avenue.

In 1968 the neighbouring house at 99 Nemesu Avenue was purchased for \$20,000 with help from the mother church. In November 1970, the Sembawang B-P Church (SBPC) was inaugurated.

The idea of renovating the premises for expansion was mooted in March 1974 and put into action in 1975. That year also saw the church supporting four FEBC students, viz Bob Phee, Tony Ting, Wyle Tan, Ian Heng (and later Tan Choon Seng).

On 31 August 1975, Mr Bob Phee was elected as the first pastor, formally installed on 19 September 1975.

Worship Services were held at ten in the morning with a regular attendance of about seventy. The weekly pulpit was filled by guest speakers in addition to messages by the pastor and later, by some deacons of the Church.

In August 1978, Pastor Phee obtained study leave with the Church's support to read his Master's at Covenant Theological Seminary. Together with his wife, Siew Lan, they were commissioned by the church on 30 July 1978.



Sembawang B-P Church (Kalidasa Ave)

With the return of Pastor Bob Phee in April 1981 from the United States the Lord gave the Church an opportunity to tender for the shophouse at 9 Kalidasa Avenue (Teachers' Estate). In September 1981 Sembawang's tender of \$390,000 for the shophouse won over three other churches. Subsequently, this price was reduced to \$380,000. The Lord not only gave us victory but provided the funds through B-P Churches. Life, our mother Church, loaned us \$70,000, and Galilee \$40,000.

About two years after the dissolution of Synod, on 15 December 1990, the Church acquired the upper storey of 9A Kalidasa Avenue at the cost of \$200,000. The additional floor space of 1500 square feet enabled the Junior Sunday School to hold its classes in the same building.

A Mandarin Worship Service was launched on 8 March 1992. Preacher Cai Hong Huying made himself available to serve the Chinese-speaking congregation. As it is conducted at the same time as the English Service at 9.30 am, this greatly facilitates the Chinese-speaking parents.

When a bungalow house located at 13 Bright Hill Crescent with an area of 17,532 square feet was put up for sale, the whole congregation unanimously voted to purchase it at \$2.607 million. The semi-detached house at 99 Nemesu Avenue was sold at \$610,000 to help meet the payment. From a bank loan together



Bright Hill Crescent property

with the love-gifts and interest-free loans from B-P Churches, members and friends the bungalow was acquired on 25 February 1993. In June 1995 the Bright Hill Crescent property was sold for \$8 million with the view of building a proper church complex.

Mission Outreaches to Thailand, Philippines, West Africa and Saipan

Chiangmai

The mission work in Chiangmai began in 1987 with Chou Cheng Chang, a young Yunanese trained at Chin Lien Bible Seminary and Singapore Bible College. In 1989, mission teams led by Pastor Bob Phee made regular trips lasting from ten to fourteen days to Chiangmai, Takuti, Lusi and Lahu villages in the northern mountains of Thailand.

In 1991, Evangelist Chou Cheng Chang got our work registered as Shiloh B-P Church, a Christian Association recognised by the Thai government. The benefit of the registration is that Shiloh could then establish churches on Thai soil legally. In June 1994 a double-storey house sitting on 6,500 square feet was purchased for baht 2.1 million or \$128,000. After renovation, the new church has an attendance of 120 in two language services: Mandarin/Thai and Lahu/Thai.

The house provides accommodation for the evangelist and his family.

Bacolod

The support of Rev Nemuel Muleta, a Filipino pastor by individual members of SBPC went back as early as 1974. He received his theological education from the former Discipleship Training Centre at Chancery Road. He returned to his country to

serve as a full-time staff with the Inter-Varsity Fellowship. But in 1985, he founded a church under the banner of Evangelical Free Church in Davao City.

In April 1986, SBPC adopted him as our evangelist. In 1989, he resigned from the Evangelical Free Church. He felt that it was becoming ecumenical. Hence, he returned to his hometown of Bacolod city to establish an independent church known as the Grace Bible Church with full support from SBPC.

After Mt Pinatubo's eruption on September 1991, Pastor Bob Phee, Elder Phua, Dn Handson Fu and Dn Gilbert Leow made a trip to the Grace Bible Church to study Pastor Nemuel's ministry. As the top floor of a four-storey office building was not convenient for worshippers, a single-storey bungalow house was purchased for \$45,000. It is located 7 km south of Bacolod city.

In August 1994, pastor Nemuel and two other pastors formed the Association of Fundamental Grace Bible Churches of the Philippines (AFGBCP). Its constitution follows closely the constitution of Sembawang B-P Church. It aims to extend the Gospel to other parts of the Philippines.

Ivory Coast

Rev Joshua Wonsia, ordained by Rev Timothy Tow, Rev Bob Phee and two other Liberian pastors in Danane on 12 July 1994 has established three outreaches on the borders of Ivory Coast and Liberia. Since he returned to West Africa in May 1991 after graduating from Far Eastern Bible College, he has been ministering mainly to Liberian refugees but has also preached to the French-speaking Ivorians in Douborlay about 10 km from Danane.

As a request came to building a church in Douborlay, Life B-P Church and SBPC have sent \$10,000. Rev Wonsia reported that a ground breaking ceremony took place in September 1994.



Owing to shortage of steel bars and the rainy season, the completion of the church building has been delayed.

Grace B-P Church runs also an elementary Christian school in Danane. It has more than 150 children who are taught in English and French.

As the civil strife in Liberia prolongs since it broke out in December 1989, the refugees will continue to find haven in Ivory Coast. The ultimate goal of Rev Wonsia's ministry is to plant churches and gospel stations, set up a Bible school in Liberia when a new government maintains peace and order to the land of the free slaves.

Saipan

The latest outreach of SBPC is the sending of Mr and Mrs Wong Chin Woon, both FEBC graduates as missionaries to the Chinese garment factory workers in Saipan, June 1995.

V. GALILEE (by Rev Philip Heng)

By God's grace, Galilee Church was established as a witness for God on the west coast of Singapore.

5 June 1960-13 February 1972—Pasir Panjang

When Rev and Mrs Paul Contento, veteran missionaries of Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF) relocated to Vietnam in 1960, they offered their rented bungalow at the sea-front to Rev Timothy Tow to set up an outreach for God. Thank God for Rev Tow and the Session of Life Church who accepted the opportunity

and challenge. They also received the support of the leaders of Zion and Faith B-P Churches. The pioneers were Sister Ivy Tan (now Mrs Timothy Tow), Brothers Allan Ang, Vincent Leong and the Leong sisters Maureen (now Mrs Mahadevan) and Irene (now Mrs Ng Thiam Chua). They were then in a youth group called “Pasir Panjang Young Christians’ Fellowship” and in God’s perfect time, constituted the nucleus for our young Church. Rev Tow named the new church “Galilee” as we were beside the sea at Number 58 (later re-numbered 175) Pasir Panjang Road, 5.25 m.s.

Galilee Church grew from a charter-membership of 17 [1960] to 135 by 1972. Sunday School was started on 3 July 1960 with Dn Chia Hong Chek, borrowed from Life B-P Church, as Superintendent. YF started in 1961, headed by Mr Chee Ah Chai; Prayer Meeting in 1962, led by Mr Robert Ong; Bible Study in 1963, with Mr Philip Heng. During this period, we had nine Bible Camps to build up the people and seven Gospel campaigns to bring the souls in. The young congregation also reached out to Jurong (later Bethlehem-Jurong B-P Church) [3 October 1960], Sambau Street (now Nazareth B-P Church) [1 February 1970] and Pulau Brani [3 April 1971]. On 3 January 1971, Dn and Mrs Vincent Leong offered their home at Commonwealth Avenue for Bible Study (later Hebron B-P Church). We also ministered to the Tamils at Kelapa Sawit Oil Palm Estate in 1971 (now Kelapa Sawit Tamil B-P Church). During these early years, God laid on the Assistant Pastor’s heart to “tithe” the membership into God’s full-time service. God called seven Galileans to study locally and three overseas to prepare for full-time Christian service. The first Galilean theological graduate and first graduate of FEBC was Miss Ivy Tan.

Our church elders viz Elder Heng Mui Kiah and Elder Lim Khng Seng were “borrowed” from Life B-P Church. Elder Chia Hong Chek was elected at Galilee in May 1969. Rev Timothy Tow was founding Pastor (1960-69). Mr Philip Heng assumed



Nazareth B-P Church

duties as Assistant Pastor in 1964 and became Pastor in 1969. Mr John C B Lim became student Pastor in 1970 and Miss Gan Sai Lin joined as full-time staff in September 1971.

14 February 1972-2 June 1979—Gilstead Road

Although our land lease expired in April 1964, God graciously spared us ten times till we had to move on 14 February 1972. Then followed seven years of “exile” when we relocated at Life B-P Church. Worship service attendance went down from 130 to 90, 80, 70 and 66 in four successive weeks. That was the lowest! Prophets of doom said that Galilee would be no more. Bible Study went down from 15 to 3 and Prayer Meeting from 18 to 2. But God assured and sustained us. He still had use for us. We were out of our beloved Pasir Panjang but God had a higher purpose to lift our spiritual vision further afield.

Rev Tow kindly received us into the Life Church premises. During this time, God “added to the Church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47). By God’s grace, our congregation grew to more than 250. Thank God for many answers to prayers—for souls saved, souls built up and souls delivered from demonic bondage, for those sent forth to the mission field and for the new sanctuary. Praise God for His great power in saving souls and in setting them free from Satan’s bondage. During this period, more obeyed the Lord and went for full-time training—six locally and five overseas. Fourteen served the Lord through the Operation Mobilisation (OM) and three in other para-church organisations.

Meanwhile, search for suitable and affordable sites for a church took us to nearly 100 parcels of land. In August 1972, Pastor Heng was invited to pastor the newly-established Calvary B-P Church in Jurong. Galilee Church Session consented to share their Pastor. Through the good services of Elder (Dr) Tow Siang Hwa, land at Pandan Gardens was secured in July 1976—for Galilee and for Calvary-Pandan, side-by-side. Ground-claiming Service was held on 1 January 1977 and the construction of the sanctuary began on 16 October 1977, at a cost of \$400,000 for the building and \$150,000 for the furnishings, etc.

Dn Lim Kim Hee was elected as Elder on 19 August 1973. Rev Anthony Tan became Assistant Pastor in 1978. The following were full-time workers: Miss Joanna Yam (1972), Mr Anthony Tan (1976), Mr Swee Thian Hoe (1976) and Miss Teow Ah Eng (1976).

3 June 1970-30 April 1989—Pandan Gardens

Through God’s providence, we moved into our “Promised Land,” a brand-new building at 202 Pandan Gardens, on our 19th Anniversary, 3 June 1979. The new sanctuary was dedicated on 3 November 1979. That same evening, God provided for all our



Galilee B-P Church

building bills. The Church continued to consolidate and grow and several more offered their lives to serve the Lord full-time. Four studied locally, one studied overseas and five more served the Lord through the OM. Five served in local para-church organisations. One became a local pastor and another pastored an overseas church. In 1982 Galilee Session decided to terminate our support to non-separatist para-church organisations and concentrate on church-based missions through Galilee. Thus in 1984, Galilee reached out to Medan and supported Rev Wesly Siregar who was ordained on 1 January 1985 at Galilee. We also financially supported his sons, Dohar, Haposan and Agus and the Yayasan. The Medan outreach was headed by Rev Frankie Low.

In 1982, it was decided to proceed with the second phase of our building programme at a cost of \$1.2 million. When the building was completed, Pastor Heng went on sabbatical [August 1983-August 1985] to the USA, to do post-graduate studies at

Grace Theological Seminary. In 1984, Galilee Kindergarten was started with Mrs Doris Aik as the Principal. Pastor Heng took over from Frankie Low as Chairman of the Kindergarten Management Committee on 1 February 1988. Church membership grew to 413 in April 1989.

After the Church General Elections of August 1988, there was some unhappiness over Pastor Heng's belief and practice of "exorcism," in praying for the deliverance of souls in demonic bondage. At the same time, he was suspended from teaching at the FEBC by the Board of Directors in December 1988. After he satisfactorily answered the 17-page charges levelled by Dr Tow Siang Hwa, President of the Board, Rev Heng resigned from the FEBC on 7 March 1989. The matter came to a climax on 30 April 1989. A Church court case was held, presided by Elder Joshua Lim of Calvary B-P Church. Rev Timothy Tow was present. Pastor Heng was charged by the majority of Session members for "false teaching" in regard to his practice of "exorcism," for not having personal integrity and for poor administration—all three! Only Dn Lai Swee Huat stood 100% with the Pastor. But God over-ruled. The congregation voted two-to-one to retain Pastor Heng.

During this period, the following joined as full-time staff: Mr Eric Kwan (12 August 1980), Dn Frankie Low (1 July 1981), Mr Frederick Ang Lee Kwang (23 September 1985). Three Elders were elected on 1 February 1981, viz Elder Su Hong Zee, Elder Michael Tan and Elder David Teo.

Since 1 May 1989—Pandan Gardens (After the Division)

The majority of church leaders led by Assistant Pastor Frankie Low and Elder Su Hong Zee and a group of about 60 left to start a new church "just across the fence" at Calvary-Pandan. A

few joined Calvary, Life and Zion B-P Churches. Galilee began the arduous task of rebuilding. Thank God for seeing us through it all. Thank God Elder Michael Tan returned to serve in the Session. Dn Lai Swee Huat, Dn Ong Hock Khee, Dn Simon Nagarajan and Dn John Chiew remained in office. A core-group, consisting of Pastor, remnant Session members and several keen Galileans, “held the fort” till By-Elections on 31 December 1989. Elder Phua Chor Kok was appointed our Legal Advisor on 14 September 1989.

Thank God for many who took up key leadership roles in Sunday school, fellowship groups and various church departments willingly and cheerfully. Worship Service attendance plummeted from 542 to 271, right after 30 April 1989. But God blessed the Church with many newcomers. During Christmas 1989, a record 75 were received into the membership. Truly, “this is the Lord’s doing; it is marvellous in our eyes” (Psalm 118:23). All praise and glory to the Lord!

During this period, the following joined as full-time staff: Mr Simon Nagarajan (January 1990), Mr Ong Hock Khee (January 1990) and Mr Nathaniel Heng (February 1994). Mr Simon was ordained in 1994 and was elected Assistant Pastor on 12 March 1995. John Chiew was elected Elder on 7 August 1991. Dn Lai Swee Huat joined the FEBC for full-time study. Two others went overseas to study Theology.

Galilee Mandarin Worship Service was inaugurated on 7 July 1991 with Mr Moses Tan as full-time worker (July 1991-December 1993). Mr Tay Kok Foo served from March 1994-March 1995. Mr Ong Hock Khee took charge of the Mandarin work from May 1995.

Galilee Evening Worship Service was started on 5 June 1994 with Rev Simon Nagarajan in-charge.

The Dissolution of the Synod, 1988

Galilee Church represented by its Pastors, Rev Philip Heng and Rev Frank Low, and Elders Su Hong Zee, Chia Hong Chek, Lim Kim Hee and David Teo were strongly opposed to the dissolution of the Synod. We were agreed the Synod should remain as one. Only those not adhering to the original position of the B-P Church should be removed. Despite our strong protest against the dissolution, it took place. God's will be done!

After the Dissolution of the Synod

After the dissolution of the Synod in October 1988, Galilee faced new problems of its own. After the Elections in August 1988, Pastor Heng presented an over-view of the history of Galilee Church and his vision for the future of the Church. He mentioned that the growth of Galilee Church could be traced to Gospel Rallies, to Youth work, Sunday School ministry, Bible camps and the deliverance ministry wherein families were introduced to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as they brought loved ones to be set free from demonic bondage. Certain Session members objected to Pastor's belief and practice of the expulsion of evil spirits and began to undermine the Pastor's position and ministry. God knows. Pastor was eventually charged for "false teaching" because of his practice of "exorcism." However, God sustained His servant and more than two-thirds voted in favour of the Pastor to remain in office. The faction led by Elder Su Hong Zee and Rev Frankie Low, moved across the fence to found Philadelphia B-P Church. Many Sunday School teachers and the majority of leaders of the AF and YAF resigned en bloc but praise the Lord for old-timers who rallied in support of the Church during the crisis. By God's grace, the Church weathered the storm after which peace prevailed.

Galilee Church still believes in “the deliverance ministry,” that God is able through His servants to expel evil spirits in the authority and name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Thank God for seven B-P ministers who stood with Pastor Heng in his conviction. Those members who did not believe left the Church. Thank God for Mr Simon Nagarajan and Mr Ong Hock Khee who in their final year at the FEBC, decided to assist Rev Heng in the work at Galilee. They delayed their graduation so as to assist Pastor in administrating and ministering to the Church.

The Church still maintained its outreach to Medan and Kuta Baru. In March 1992, Miss Mariana Siregar came to study at the FEBC with the support of Galilee Church. In July 1995, land was purchased at Belawan, Indonesia, to start a new Church. In 1991, at the request of Brother Javed Yousuf, to link his church to Galilee, we reached out to Lahore, Pakistan. Pastor Heng and team make annual trips to Lahore.

A Mandarin Service was started in July 1991 and a Second English Worship Service, 5.30 pm, was inaugurated in June 1994. Annual Gospel Rallies were held and souls were added to God’s Kingdom. The Church focused on evangelism through family life and tried to reach parents of the Kindergarten children. More volunteers, especially men, have come forward to help in Sunday School teaching. Praise God for an enlarged Session, currently with a Pastor, Assistant Pastor, two Elders, twelve Deacons, two Deaconesses and four full-time workers.

Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth’s sake. (Psalm 115:1)

The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. (Psalm 126:3)

Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! (Psalm 107:8)

VI. FAITH

(by Rev Dr Quek Kiok Chiang)

Faith B-P Church was founded by an amalgamation of two congregations—the Chinese service of Zion B-P Church and the Central Christian Church then functioning in Chung Hwa Institute at Short Street run by Elder Quek Khiok Meng. The Church met for service in two classrooms of Zion Kindergarten property taken over by Life B-P Church with the help of Central Christian Church from the “Christian Stewardship Foundation” headed by Rev Jason Linn. Rev Quek Kiok Chiang, then an elder of Life B-P Church ordained to the ministry in 1956 by Bible-Presbyterian ministers attending the Third General Assembly in Singapore of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches, and pastoring Zion B-P Church from 1957, served as pastor of Faith B-P Church as well. Revelation 2:10 “Be thou faithful unto death” was chosen to be the motto of the Church. With the formation of Faith B-P Church in addition to Life and Zion, a Singapore Presbytery of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Singapore and Malaya was inaugurated on 24 July 1960.

In October 1961, Life B-P Church, which had built her own new Church on a good piece of 99-year leasehold land which Rev K C Quek was led of the Lord to obtain from the Government Land Office, gave up her right to the Zion Kindergarten property. This was done in the spirit of brotherly love and on the principle that each congregation in the same B-P denomination should have its own property. The responsibility of the stewardship of ZK property was thus left entirely to the two sister churches of Zion and Faith.

In August 1966, piling for new Zion and Faith Sanctuary with a Kindergarten Hall downstairs commenced. Foundation stonelaying took place on 18 June 1967, with Rev Quek Khee Swee, father of Rev Quek Kiok Chiang and advisory pastor of



Faith and Zion B-P Churches building

Faith B-P Church, unveiling the foundation stone at a joint service of the two congregations. The new Sanctuary was dedicated on Saturday, 30 December 1967.

Immediately following the dedication and use of the new Church and Kindergarten building, Zion and Faith B-P Churches jointly organised a Ling Kwang Mission to evangelise the nearby Cheng San rural area. A Ling Kwang Children's Centre started on 4 January 1968, together with free tuition classes, and a Ling Kwang Mission Clinic was declared open on 8 March, with Elder Dr Tow Siang Hwa officiating at the opening service. This Clinic later moved to Ang Mo Kio with the re-settled rural residents and moved back to Ling Kwang Home for Senior Citizens at the end of 1983.

In April 1969, Mr and Mrs Koh Kian Mia established the Toa Payoh Christian Church. Faith B-P Church gave financial,

manpower and supervisory assistance and continued to do so until 1986 when the Church registered independently under the Societies Act as a B-P Church.

In August 1969, Rev Quek Kiok Chiang, aged 53, opted to retire two years earlier from Government Service in order to have more time to serve the Lord.

In 1970 Faith B-P Church began pastoral supervision both of the Pulau Tekong Gospel Centre and Kwong Wai Siu Hospital mission work. The work at the Hospital carries on, but the Gospel Centre had to close following the Government acquisition of the whole Tekong Island for development purposes.

In October of the same year, Mr Quek Swee Hwa, eldest son of Rev Quek Kiok Chiang, returned from abroad and was ordained and installed as Pastor of Zion B-P Church in place of his father. The latter continued to pastor Faith, but has been serving concurrently as advisory pastor to Zion.

In March 1971 when the Ang Mo Kio rural area was acquired by Government for urban development, Faith and Zion B-P Churches in the name of Ling Kwang Mission applied to the Housing and Development Board for land to build a home for the aged. This application was accepted in principle of consideration, in view of the proven community service the Ling Kwang Mission and its clinic and charity section had been doing since 1968.

In the same year Faith B-P Church began to go into foreign missions in coordination with the Bible-Presbyterian Missions (BPM), whose predecessor, the Malaysia Pioneer Mission (MPM), was organised by Life B-P Church in 1952 at Rev K C Quek's Beng Wan Road residence. The first overseas mission trip was made to West Kalimantan, Indonesia with Rev Dr Timothy Tow and Rev K C Quek as co-pioneers. Thereafter in 1974, Faith B-P Church began actively and regularly to assist the local brethren in organising a West Kalimantan Pioneer Mission. Under

this WKPM, there are now 28 Protestant Churches and rural mission stations, a Home for Dayak orphans and poor children initially financed by ICR-USA, a Salvation Old Folks Home and a Salvation School, initially financed by ICR-Netherlands, and a well-established Bible School for Dayak Preachers. Regular financial and supervisory assistance has ever since been provided by Faith B-P Church, with regular aid from ICR-Netherlands, Zion B-P Church and Evangelise China Fellowship.

Faith B-P Church has also through the pastor assisted in the formation of pioneer missions in East Java and Bali, and of Councils of Christian Churches in Indonesia, Burma and Thailand to cooperate with the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) for the Faith.

In October 1976, the Church appointed Mr Thiam Fook Ping as Preacher and Church Secretary to assist the Honorary Pastor Rev Quek and the Church Session in carrying out the expanding activities of the Church.

In 1977, the Government finally approved a 30-year lease of a big piece of land just adjacent to the Church and Kindergarten to the Bible-Presbyterian Welfare Services (BPWS) to build a Ling Kwang Home for the Senior Citizens. Faith and Zion Churches took the lead in raising funds for the project with help from other B-P Churches, friends and the public.

Following Christmas 1979 and Easter and Christmas 1980, Faith B-P Church took the lead in organising three evangelistic and relief missions to Kampuchean and Laotian refugee camps in Thailand under the joint auspices of BPWS and ICR Singapore. At the same time, evangelism and Christian relief among the Chinese settlers and tribal people in Thai-Burma border area was initiated and has continued ever since.



Ling Kwang Home for Senior Citizens

From January 1980, Faith B-P Church home missions extended to Chia Keng Prison, with evangelism, counselling and rehabilitation. This prison ministry now continues at Tampines.

On 1 May 1981 Ling Kwang Home held Groundbreaking Service. Foundation Stonelaying Service took place on 26 February 1983 and on 31 December 1983 the Home, built at a cost of over \$7 million was dedicated. With the Home and the Faith. Zion Churches being just adjacent to each other, convenience has been experienced in many ways especially for voluntary service.

On 30 October 1983, Mr Thiam Fook Ping was ordained as a minister of the Gospel by the Synod of the B-P Church and appointed Associate Pastor of Faith B-P Church. In May of the same year, Rev Quek Kiok Chiang, for his proclamation and defence of the Faith over the years, was conferred with the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by Faith Theological Seminary in the USA.

On 17 November 1986, all the 16 individual B-P Churches in the denomination of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore were separately registered under the Societies Act and the Charities Act, and thereby received independent, legal status under the law. In the amended Constitution of Faith B-P Church, a Board of Advisors consisting of retired Ordained Ministers and Elders of the Church has been provided to assist the Board of Elders and Church Session in exercising discipline in the Church and giving advice on matters of major importance to the Church.

Following the voluntary dissolution of the Synod of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore on 30 October 1988, Faith B-P Church continued to be blessed of God in her various ministries like all the other 15 B-P Churches separately registered under the Societies and Charities Act.

On the first Lord's day of January 1989, Faith B-P Church established a "Truth Mission" at Hotel Equatorial, with Mr Chang Chian Hui who had just graduated from FEBC appointed as Preacher in charge.

On Saturday, 28 January 1989, Mr Lim Jui Kai, who had served as a preacher at Faith B-P Church since January 1987, was ordained as a minister of the Gospel at Faith B-P Church, and elected as another Associate Pastor of the Church at the AGM of the Church the next day.

On 17 January 1989, the Church instituted a Zhi Miao Xiaozu system (支苗小组) to promote and strengthen Christian fellowship among members of the Church in their respective localities throughout the island state of Singapore.

In September 1989, Rev Lim Jui Kai resigned as an Associate Pastor of Faith B-P Church and has been serving as a church pastor in the USA.

On 20 January 1990, groundbreaking service for Ling Kwang Home's \$11 million extension project took place, increasing the

bed capacity of the Home from 180 to 350. The spacious basement car park of the 4-storey extension building provided a great relief to the parking problem of the two sponsoring churches on the Lord's Day.

In June 1990, Rev Thiam returned from the USA following completion of his further theological training and resumed service in the Church as Associate Pastor.

In the mission month of June 1990, another mission trip was made to West Kalimantan, Indonesia for the phase-one opening thanksgiving service of "Poliklinik Serbekat", an additional community service provided namely by Faith and Zion B-P Churches. Plans have been made for the polyclinic to develop into a mission hospital by the year 2000 with three resident doctors and twelve nursing staff.

In early 1994, Faith B-P Church's Truth Mission developed into Truth B-P Church and has been registered separately under the Societies and Charities Act. The Church, now renamed Antioch B-P Church, remained in fraternal relationship with Faith B-P Church, her former mother church with Rev Quek Kiok Chiang serving as advisory Pastor. From March 1994, following the approval of the constitutional amendment by the Registrar of Societies, Pastor Quek has been re-designated "Senior Pastor" of the Church and Rev Thiam, "Pastor".

Other Related Ministries

Over the years the Lord has led Faith B-P Church and her Senior Pastor into the following other related ministries of missions and Christian relief, defence of the Faith and Christian literature:

- Singapore Christian Evangelistic League
Vice-President and English Secretary

- Chin Lien Bible Seminary
Trustee and Lecturer
- Singapore Council of Christian Churches
President and now Vice-President
- Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches
Secretary
- International Council of Christian Churches
Executive Secretary
- Bible-Presbyterian Welfare Services
President
- Ling Kwang Home for Senior Citizens (under BPWS)
Chairman
- Bishan Home for the Intellectually Disabled (under BPWS)
Chairman
- Ju Eng Home for Senior Citizens (also a Christian Home with some members of B-P Churches on the Board of Directors)
Chairman
- Singapore Christian Home for the Aged
Vice-Chairman
- Far Eastern Beacon English monthly (now serving all ICCC/ FECCC members as well as other readers)
Editor
- Southeast Asia Christian Chinese monthly (南洋基督徒)
Editor

VII. ZION

(by Dr Quek Swee Hwa)

Zion Bible-Presbyterian Church was founded on June 23, 1957 by the Life Bible-Presbyterian Church. Rev Quek Kiok Chiang served as the first Pastor and Rev Timothy Tow was the first Principal of the Zion Kindergarten, a project of both Zion

BPC and Central Christian Church (later to become Faith Bible-Presbyterian Church). Both served in an honorary capacity. From an initial group of 60 worshippers in 1957, the number has increased today in 1995 to a total of about 1,300 meeting at the 12 weekly services in two church locations, Zion Serangoon (in Serangoon Gardens) and Zion Bishan (in Bishan East).

The weekly attendance at the Sunday School/Christian Education attendance is about 420 and at the Youth Fellowship, about 50. In addition, about 80-100 children participate in our AWANA clubs on Saturdays and another 330 or so belong to the 38 Action Groups most of which meet fortnightly on a weekday. Our Adults Ministry includes ministries to singles, ladies, senior adults and families. A prison and drug ministry reaches out weekly to about 80 persons in three institutions, and we are also giving “aftercare” to many ex-addicts and ex-prisoners.

In October 1961, our Mother Church gave us a much-appreciated gift—she relinquished her right to the property at Numbers 3 and 5 Tavistock Avenue on the principle that the daughter congregation was doing well and should therefore own her own property. The stewardship of this property fell into the hands of both Zion and Faith Churches.

Church Planting in Singapore

On February 19, 1961 Zion started the Seletar Hills Sunday School, which became Bethany Bible-Presbyterian Church and is now Bethany Independent Presbyterian Church. On July 10, 1977 Zion started a new church in Ang Mo Kio New Town, Emmanuel B-P Church. In 1987 Zion adopted a Chinese work, the Changi Gospel Hall, which later became Cana B-P Church. Also in 1987 we began the Jordan B-P Mission, now meeting as the Zion Bishan Evening Service. Other Home Missions work include a prison-cum-drug aftercare facility at a house in Serangoon



Zion B-P Church (Bishan)

Gardens—Shelter—and partnership programmes with drug halfway houses (Helping Hand, Breakthrough Missions and Turning Point), and social work partnership projects such as Ling Kwang Home for Senior Citizens and the yet-to-be-built Bishan Home for the Intellectually Disabled, both projects of the Bible-Presbyterian Welfare Services. A partnership ministry which starts in Singapore and goes beyond our shores is an outreach to construction workers, another to Filipina maids (our Tagalog Fellowship) and work with Nepalese from the Gurkha Contingent in Singapore. We also support the training of laity through the work of the Biblical Graduate School of Theology.

On Reformation Sunday, 30 October 1994, a new church location was dedicated at Bishan East. Worship services in English, Mandarin-Cantonese, and Tamil were ministered to about 850 persons weekly just five months after we have started in Bishan New Town. Praise the Lord! Our Zion Bishan

Kindergarten is well-received by the community as we seek to make our presence in Bishan relevant to the needs of the people there. Evangelism Equipping, our personal evangelism programme, continues to be an important means of witnessing to all in Bishan and elsewhere.

Church Planting and Missions Overseas

Zion devotes almost half of her annual budget to missions work, both in Singapore and overseas. Zion members are serving as missionaries in Malaysia, India, and London. A major foreign missions commitment is our daughter church in India, the Zion Bible-Presbyterian Church in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. It is pastored by Rev Lional Joseph an Indian national and a graduate of the Far Eastern Bible College.

Our foreign missions work centres primarily on partnership programmes with other churches and organisations of like-minded faith and convictions. In India, we are helping actively in the work of about 35 churches which belong to various denominational missions, most of which are members of, or are contemplating membership in, the International Council of Christian Churches. These churches/organisations are the Free Baptist Churches of West Bengal and Sikkim, the new Life Ministry (in Shillong, NE India), and the St Thomas Evangelical Fellowship (in Kerala). Closer home in Malaysia we are a major partner of the Malaysian Christian Evangelistic League, an offshoot of the Singapore Christian Evangelistic League, founded by the late Dr John Sung. Four churches have been established among the Chinese and orang Asli.

In Indonesia, we are presently working with about 10 churches in Central Java and North Bali. We continue to keep our fellowship links with the Gunung Willis Pioneer Mission in East Java, and are also involved as a sponsoring church for the West

Kalimantan Pioneer Mission. Both missions are members of the ICCC.

We support also missions work in Mongolia, the Baraka Bible-Presbyterian Church in Israel, and other ministries.

Before and After

In the 38 years of our existence we are conscious of one continuous work, despite the dissolution of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore in 1988. What we have done since 1988 has been closely linked with the founding principles of our Church. So evangelism, missions, social work and the important work of strengthening the home base—all these have been in the forefront of our church work. In our separated witness in these last days of apostasy, we have maintained our links locally with the Singapore Council of Christian Churches, regionally with the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches and internationally with the ICCC.

To God Be the Glory

We are very much aware that the time of our Lord's Return is near. We will continue to maintain a separated witness for the Lord in our stand on the authority of the inerrant and infallible Word of God. We shall strive to win more souls for the Kingdom of God and nurture them in the precious faith, free from the excesses of the Charismatic Movement and from other doctrines and practices not based on the sole authority of the Bible. May God help and guide us in this work which we seek to do for Him till He comes!

VIII. LIFE

(More Offshoots on the Home Front)

Sharon

(by Rev Peter Chua)

No sooner had Calvary branched out to Jurong Town in 1971 than the Lord gave to the mother Church another offshoot. This was Sharon, formerly known as Toa Payoh B-P Church (English).

Peter Chua, a Lifer and graduate of FEBC saw the need of an outreach to Toa Payoh New Town. At that time there was established in this new town a Chinese Church under Mr Koh Kian Mia, with support from Faith B-P Church. As the Chinese Service was held in the afternoon and the Sunday morning was free, he took advantage of this vacancy to apply for the premises to start an English Service.

A committee comprising Rev Tow, Rev Quek, Dr Patrick Tan, Stephen Kuan and John Lim was formed. The Toa Payoh B-P Church (English Service) was launched on September 12, 1971.

By 1977 the Church and Sunday School had so grown they had to find bigger premises. They were obliged to return to Gilstead Road. Since the congregation no more worshipped in Toa Payoh they adopted the name Sharon. Peter Chua, with two others, was ordained by the Presbytery the same year.

Kuching

Sharon has always been closely associated with the mother Church. In August 1984 Life Church founded a kindergarten in Kuching, Sarawak (East Malaysia). This Gospel outreach was undertaken by Kim Kah Teck and Pauline Wong, both FEBC graduates. As Sharon up to this time had not extended her

ministry anywhere, she gladly took over support of this outreach to a new country, and we named it “Sharon Rose.”

Mr and Mrs Kim Kah Teck served in Kuching for six years and a number of souls were saved. When they terminated their services in Kuching, they left behind a two-storey wooden Church in a squatters area which they built on their own initiative. This work then fell on the shoulders of Mr and Mrs Bong Boon Chong, Bible students of Rev Djunaidi of Pontianak, West Kalimantan. Today Sharon Rose B-P Church has rented the upstairs premises of a corner terrace house not far from the squatters. The work is slowly picking up with regular bi-monthly visits by Rev Djunaidi to officiate the Lord’s Supper.



Gospel Light Mission

Gospel Light Mission

One young Sharonite, Cheong Chin Meng, was trained at FEBC and was ready to join in the ministry of Sharon Church. Like making a full circle, the Sharonites returned to the Chinese Church from which they started out in 1971. Now, this was 1992, 21 years after. Again, using the empty slot of the early hour on Sunday morning, they founded a Gospel Light B-P Mission with special emphasis on the Sunday School for children.

With the ordination of Cheong Chin Meng on September 11, 1994 this Gospel Light B-P Mission has also attained self-support, and is on the way to becoming a full-fledged Church. To upgrade himself Chin Meng is enrolled in the MRE course now offered by FEBC.

Grace (by Rev Tan Eng Boo)

The year 1976 saw the birth of Grace B-P Church in the Eastern part of Singapore. A sister of Life B-P Church gave a beautiful three-storey mansion at 5 Jalan Haji Salam. This building used to be a hotel. Because of her sacrificial gift, the Lord has blessed Grace Church with three other congregations.

Grace Church was inaugurated on 3 January, 1976. Thirty Lifers came to pioneer this work under Rev (Dr) Patrick Tan.

In 1978, Grace Church gave birth to her first offspring, the Mandarin Service. Rev Lin Tah Mon was the honorary pastor. At the same time, Rev Tan Eng Boo, from Galilee B-P Church, was sent to help out in the English Service. He became assistant pastor on 21 May 1978. He was ordained in 1981 and took over the ministry of Grace Church when Rev Patrick Tan returned to Life BPC.



Grace B-P Church

In September 1981, Grace started another ministry, this time in Changi, called the **Shalom B-P Church**. Thirty Gracians went out to start this work under Rev Tan Choon Seng. The group worshipped at St George's Chapel, which was owned by the Singapore Armed Forces. Today, Shalom BPC has their own church building in Pasir Ris. It is a Utility Church that today gives shelter to two other budding B-P churches, viz, **Macedonia** and **Gethsemane**. Macedonia is under Elder George Lim, and Gethsemane under Rev Prabhudas Koshy, both FEBC graduates. Elder Mah Chin Kwang must also be honourably mentioned.

Although Grace was a young church, she was enabled to produce her first full-time student to Far Eastern Bible College in 1981. Catherine Ng studied for three years and became our staff worker. She is presently Grace's missionary to China.



Shalom B-P Church

In 1985, another Gracian, Willy Ng, also entered FEBC. He is currently one of our staff workers.

Grace Church started yet another ministry in 1983, called the Grace Evening Service. This later became Gethsemane B-P Church. This work is now autonomous and is presently under the leadership of Rev Koshy and Elder Mah Chin Kwang.

We are now in our nineteenth year of service in 1995. We have seen how the Lord has blessed this ministry. We can only echo the words of the Psalmist, “The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad” (Psalm 127:3).

Today, our emphasis in Grace is on foreign missions. We are glad to have Catherine Ng in China. Now we also have Alex Nasongo Wugu, a Kenyan FEBC graduate, establishing a work in Kenya with Grace’s support.



Life Book Centre

Life Book Centre

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 B-P Church at Gilstead Road, the book ministry idea took more concrete shape. That corner-room now used by the Church's EDP Office 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.

In January 1976, Stephen Kuan 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 run 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 yet 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 Life Book Centre. LBC benefits the Church and the Church LBC 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 co-existed side by side since 1962, LBC is also the College's Book Centre. Besides FEBC students and Life Church members, the Book Centre is also patronised by pastors, full-time workers and keen readers from other Churches.

Since 1983, LBC has ventured into publishing and reprinting selected titles such as *John Sung My Teacher*, *Willmington's Guide to the Bible*, *Buswell's Systematic Theology*, etc.

Today, it has branched out to Funan Centre, Bishan, North Bridge Road, Serangoon Gardens and Jurong East. Indeed it is a Gospel Munitions ministry serving the Churches and Bible Colleges in Singapore.

New Life

(by William Teo in Life Weekly)

The New Life Church building project started in 1979 when a group of young people from Life Church discovered a piece of choice land earmarked by HDB for a church. When this was reported to Session, the news was received with mixed feelings. Some were enthusiastic, others were rather apprehensive. This is quite understandable as we had no more than \$30,000 in the Bank. Moreover, many of us had no experience in church building. As our pastor was in Faith Seminary as visiting Professor, Session decided to write him for guidance. Pastor responded promptly and gave his full blessing.

Not long after that HDB called for tenders. With all our wisdom we submitted ours but failed badly; our tender was the second lowest. The Lord, however, was most gracious. He gave us a second chance. HDB decided to reject all the tenders including the highest because they were not up to expectation. In the meantime our Pastor returned home. He launched the building fund with a first offering and a message “Onwards to Woodlands.”

Our wait for the second tender was a long but pleasant one as it allowed us to build up our funds. By August 1980 when HDB called for the second tender, our building fund had reached \$300,000. This, however, was but one tenth of the total need.

On the fateful morning of September 17, 1980, the Pastor, Treasurer and two FEBC students went to HDB personally to submit our tender. When the result was made known on January 8, 1981, there was great rejoicing at Gilstead Road, but those who knew our financial status were trembling. We needed another \$122,000 to make up for payment to HDB within 2 weeks (land area 42,000 square feet). Pastor turned to the Lord. With His holy guidance, he wrote a heart-warming article in the Life Weekly January 11, 1981. Praise the Lord, the Holy Spirit moved the

entire congregation to respond with \$101,000 in offerings and loans. This spontaneous offering inspired more to give. Several young people offered their first month's pay, while others gave their entire savings. One gave \$1000 every month out of his salary of less than \$2000. Another gave her year's pledge in advance.

The ground breaking was held on June 6, 1982. The first progress payment certified by our Architect for \$189,000 was paid in full in October 1982.

As funds became low after the payment, Life Church Session voted to give their 13th month pay. The total pledged exceeded \$80,000. This moved many in the congregation to do the same, including one in Taipeh. The Lord moved the congregation to match dollar for dollar. The offering collected in December exceeded \$160,000.

Just before the Chinese New Year in February 1983, we received the third bill from the Contractor for \$448,000. With only \$250,000 in the bank, this bill nearly spoiled the mood of the season. Once again, we asked how and where we would get the balance of \$198,000. On the Lord's Day, February 13, 1983, which was also the first day of Chinese New Year, Pastor surprised us with an appeal to pledge on the spot. The congregation responded with their angpows and loans exceeding another \$100,000. This, together with a \$100,000 loan from Chin Lien Bible Seminary, brought great relief. Praise the Lord, the two reliefs that God had provided was a confirmation that the Lord was behind us.

I thank the Lord that He has made my job as Treasurer a pleasant one. When I took over the portfolio from Elder Seow in 1976, the grand total of the offering for that year was \$97,000. Thereafter it exceeded \$100,000. Every year since it has been a record year. 1983 will be another record year. We will exceed last



New Life B-P Church

year's record of \$846,000 soon. Will we cross the million dollar mark?

It is our prayer that members of New Life Church, from the pastor to the youngest member, will follow the example of your Mother Church. May you respond and have a share in the blessing, to help clear our outstanding loans of \$493,000 and another \$100,000 in the final bills to come.

****ED. NOTE:** Praise the Lord, New Life Church has lovingly agreed to share the remaining outstanding debt of \$600,000 equally with the Mother Church. \$300,000 = one tenth of the overall \$3 million project.

Now let Sandra Tsao, New Life Church historian relate the story more fully as printed in their commemorative magazine, 1993.

The road to Woodlands began almost fourteen years ago in September 1979 when the New Life Building Fund was set up by Life B-P Church, our Mother Church. The purchase of the land which cost \$933,000, came from free-will offerings and interest-free loans of believers. However, the total cost of land and building eventually came to approximately \$3,000,000.

The ground breaking service was held on 6 June 1982 when the Lord's land was dedicated to His purpose. The foundation stone was laid five months later by our Founding Pastor Rev Timothy Tow. The Church building was finally completed on 15 May 1983 amidst much rejoicing!

The pioneers of New Life came primarily from Life B-P Church and included the Interim Committee appointed by Life Church comprising Rev (Dr) Tan Wai Choon as Chairman, Rev (Dr) Timothy Tow (Ex-officio), Rev (Dr) Patrick Tan, Elders Khoo Peng Kiat, and Peter Wang, Deacon (Dr) Paul Tsao, Messrs Francis Leong (Secretary), Prasad Sivaraj (Treasurer), Peter Eng, Peter Chng, and Dr Sim Chee Seng.

Another group of pioneers, the Beulanders, 20 zealous young adults from Life Church, had earlier started regular Worship Services in Block 201 Marsiling Drive at the home of Mr Jimmy Lim. They were instrumental in preparing the way for the Church by fervent evangelism in the Marsiling and Woodlands area.

Rev Tan Wai Choon was our first Resident Pastor. Our first Church staff workers were Mr Eric Kwan and Mr Lau Choon Poh, both FEBC graduates, who were seconded to serve in New Life. Later, Mr Peter Chng was requested to head the Chinese Service in New Life.

Since those early days, membership has grown from a hundred and twenty-three in 1985, to two hundred and sixteen in 1993. The growth in membership during the first few years was largely the result of active evangelism. However, in later years,

this was the result of household conversions and biological growth.

Examples of active evangelism would be the Evangelism Ministry started in May 1983 with an extensive outreach programme in Woodlands. Members of this Ministry consisted of a team of about 10 New Lifers staying in surrounding multi-storey flats. The following year, under the leadership of Assistant Pastor Eric Kwan, evangelism was directed more at the visitors and friends of New Life. Visitation was organised twice a month with five to seven homes being visited. Mass tracting sessions were also held during the 1984 Christmas season and in May and June of the same year. The main thrust then was to reach out to the parents of the kindergarten children. Results from all these evangelistic activities were slow, but sure.

As the foundation stone constantly reminds all New Lifers, one of the objectives in setting up the Church in Woodlands was to facilitate the spread of the Gospel not only to Singapore but also to Malaysia and the rest of the world.

In carrying out this commission, new Life's first overseas evangelistic work was in the form of the Johor Bahru (JB) Outreach Evangelism. The decision to start a new Church in Johor Bahru was made in early 1986. Temporarily housed in Elder (Dr) Tow Siang Yeow's home at Number 85, Jalan Songkit Dua, the JB B-P Church English Service was inaugurated on 8 June 1986. However, despite encouraging results and tremendous responses, after five fruitful years, its last service was held on 24 November 1991 after the JB Municipality ordered its closure. Nevertheless, Bible Study and prayer Meetings continue to be held at Jalan Songkit Dua.

On 16 June 1992, on receiving a "Macedonian call," New Life sent out its first missionary when Associate Pastor Rev Eric Kwan and family were seconded to the London Chinese United

Reformed Church, with this ministry being jointly supported by Life B-P Church, Calvary B-P Church and New Life.

In February of the same year, after 7 years of part-time pastoring, Rev (Dr) Patrick Tan took on the role of full-time Resident Pastor after tendering his resignation as Associate Pastor of Life B-P Church. As a result of initiative taken by him, the Neighbourhood Bible Community (NBC) was formed to inculcate regular and systematic Bible Study among believers and friends with five groups meeting in Woodlands, Marsiling, Yishun, Bukit Timah and Johor Bahru.

New initiatives include the Literature Ministry that was inaugurated in 1992 on 20 September; the Book Club that was extended and renamed “Noah’s Ark” with the purpose of providing the members with a ready source of good Christian literature. The Music Ministry, aimed at upgrading congregational singing, was also formed, all to the glory of God.

Other outreaches include the Garden and Maintenance Committee formed to maintain the Church grounds and property and the Benevolent Committee, formed with the objectives of giving financial and material help to deserving members using the Benevolent Fund, thus providing succour to the poor and needy in the Church.

Other Worship Services in the Church included the Mandarin Worship Service (started in 1983) now headed by Pastor Lau Choon Poh. The Tamil Worship Service which has its origins as a house Church was started in August 1983 as an outreach of Bethlehem Jurong B-P Church. It is presently headed by Preacher Patrick Leong and Deacon Velu, along with Elder Mahadevan.

Presently, there are four English fellowship groups. They are the Junior Fellowship for those below 12 years old, the Youth Fellowship for those above 12 but below 25 years old, the Young Adults Fellowship (20-30 years) and the Adults Fellowship (27

years and above). All these groups enjoy healthy memberships and attendance at fellowship meetings, thus providing a good training ground for the future leaders of the Church.

Activities in the Church Calendar include the annual Sports Day which is organised by the Sunday School, the Annual Church Bible Camp in June, the Anniversary Praise and Thanksgiving Dinner, and the Operation Cleanup to spruce up the Church from time to time. The various Fellowship groups too, have their own activities including anniversaries, outings and retreats.

The latest change to take place has been the moving of the Sunday Worship Service to an earlier, cooler slot at 9.30 am and with the aim also of encouraging all members to stay for the 11.00 am Sunday School. The attendance at Sunday School, especially for the Adult classes, has been encouraging since making the change.

However, one area of concern remains regarding the attendance at Wednesday Night Prayer Meetings which is only regularly attended by a small, albeit fervent, group of “Prayer Warriors.” Indeed the Church marches on its knees, and one way for the Church to grow spiritually would be for the members to commit its direction to God through prayer.

The new Session, which was elected to a new three-year term just this March, consists of five Elders, one non-ruling Elder, seven Deacons and New Life’s first Deaconess.

Besides these, we also have a group of younger Church leaders, made up of the executive members of the various committees as well as those who are regularly serving the Lord in the various ministries.

The Lord has indeed been merciful to New Life over these last ten years. Although the narrow path has never been easy, God has guided New Life through many setbacks and trials and by His Grace will continue to do so.

New Life's London Mission

(by Rev Eric Kwan)

In March 1991, through the leading hand of God, I came into contact with the London Chinese United Reformed Church at Harlesden. I was then on sabbatical student leave at the London Reformed Baptist Seminary.

On my first visit to the church, I was surprised to discover the social links between members of the fellowship and the people I know in Singapore. And so I did not have much difficulty relating to members of the fellowship. Most of the members are either former Chinese Singaporeans or Malaysians migrated to the country. There were also a number of elderly English worshippers in the congregation.

I was surprised to discover that the fellowship of Chinese believers was part of a liberal Christian organisation in UK known as the United Reformed Church (URC). The word "Reformed" is misleading. At first, I thought it referred to the reformed teachings that our Bible-Presbyterian Church subscribes to, that is, the Westminster Confession of Faith. However, I realised that the term "Reformed" meant nothing more than a re-organisation of churches of the various denominations but mainly involving the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches.

Spiritually, England is a barren land. It is due to poor church attendance that smaller congregations are forced to unite together to maintain the work. As a result, they are left with many redundant church properties that are either sold or rented out for commercial and other purposes.

The URC organisation is governed by liberal ministers who deny the infallibility and inerrancy of God's Word. The emphasis has all along been on social concerns of the people. Church attendance has become a social occasion and the church has simply become an institution for marrying and burying of

members. It is shocking that even the unbelieving local people can also request for baptism, marriage and burial of their loved ones.

The baptism of infants in these churches is a mere ritualistic act. There is no understanding of the covenant of grace promised to His people through Abraham. Parents are also not properly instructed to raise up their children in the fear of the Lord.

Though the United Kingdom has a population of about 56 million, there are very few evangelical Reformed churches of Presbyterian persuasion in England. I believe that there is much we can do in this post-Christian secular society. With the rise of Islam, Hinduism and the “New Age Movement,” and the decline in Christian witness, here is a great mission field for His people to proclaim anew the Gospel truth that has been lost!

The Call for Help

Upon the sudden resignation of the part-time minister from the London Chinese URC in May 1991, a call was directed to me to assist the Church during this time of crisis. After much prayer and consideration, I was constrained to minister to them whilst I was still doing a course at the London Theological Seminary.

Call to Establish a Bible-Presbyterian Church

A call to establish a Bible-Presbyterian Church in London was then directed to New Life B-P Church, Singapore, by the London Chinese URC as a matter of urgency.

After much prayer and deliberation, the Session of New Life decided to release my family and me to help this fellowship in London. With the blessings of our church in Singapore, I submitted an application to the British High Commission requesting for a missionary visa to work in London. After meeting

with various obstacles, I finally obtained a one-year renewable visa as a “Minister of Religion” to work in UK.

Satan has not stopped throwing his fiery darts at our small congregation. We have had many struggles as we sought to maintain a distinctive Biblical testimony. There are those who appreciate the teachings of the Reformed Faith but there are also those who could not accept our stand. Nevertheless, I stand by the principle that the Church must be built solidly upon God’s Word. The Church’s decline in this land is the result of compromise and denial of God’s infallible Word.

To be effective in the ministry, I have been familiarising myself with the roads and culture of the land besides looking for an alternative place of worship near to public transportation. God willing, we trust that He will provide us with a suitable place of worship.

We stand amazed at what the Lord has done so far in our midst, although the future is uncertain. Will God maintain the cause of truth, or will our congregation go the way of compromise and unbelief? Our calling is clear in this apostate land: To stand firm in the truth, to preach the truth and to contend for the faith! May the God of all grace be pleased to keep us faithful to our calling and to advance His kingdom in this city.

Tabernacle

A group of young Christians led by Jonathan Chan assembled weekly as Tanglin Bible Class. When they shifted to meet at Life Church they became known as Life Bible Class.

In 1986 the LBC leadership felt led to incorporate as a branch of Life Church. They found an ideal meeting place in the warehouse of Life Book Centre at Tampines. The pastor named the new branch Tabernacle to remind the young people of their being pilgrims, not having a permanent home. Since Tabernacle

begins with T, it also brings to mind their early beginnings as Tanglin Bible Class.

The young church was inaugurated 28 June 1987. It has since been a bi-lingual service to cater also to the Chinese-speaking parents. It has laboured hard to bring in the unsaved. To date 39 have been baptised. Elder Chia Kim Chwee served as advisor till November 1990. Rev Ronny Khoo has been with Tabernacle from the very beginning. He was ordained on 13 October 1990. The first elder elected is Leong Kit Hoong.

Beulah House

As Church and College grew in numbers and the congestion could no more be tolerated, Life Church Session decided to expand upwards, that is, to put one more storey above the L-Annexe. This would yield 8,000 square feet.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD” (Isaiah 55:8). One year after the Dissolution of Synod there came an offer from our neighbour across Gilstead Road, the former Eye Clinic to sell their freehold property of 29,026 square feet for \$6.95 million, full payment to be made in four months. This was October 1989.

With Elder Dr Lim Teck Chye taking the lead and with the strong concurrence of the pastor and associate pastor (Dr Patrick Tan) Session did not object, and the die was cast. While doubts were voiced from both session and congregation during those crucial days, the pastor had utmost confidence in the Lord. It was the experience he gained from the Woodlands project (1983). Besides there were two million dollars in reserve, though most of this sum was loaned to daughter churches. To be exact we needed \$5.2 million to buy over the property, including tax, but not legal fees which were waived by Madam Lim Li our solicitor.



Along the way Session raised the issue on two occasions to take a bank loan, but this was objected by the pastor. Soon the four months grace period was ending and we were well below the target. Wonder of wonders, the vendor herself, out of the blue, reversed to ask for two months grace from us! For she was not ready to shift out as originally stipulated. Praise the Lord, we took this to be salvation from the Lord.

While we refused to take a bank loan which would be a blood-letting process for 15 or 20 years to come, we asked

members and friends for interest-free loans, and the congregation to give their tithes. The free loans came in like spring water at first, and as the Day of Payment loomed closer the free loans swelled swifter and higher, so that a total of \$3.1 million was received on top of \$2.1 million gifts.

The last Lord's Day before full payment, the Treasury was still short of \$385,000. "Alas," wrote the pastor in Life Weekly, "We have only one more Lord's Day left, and the final hour is come! Are we hearing a cry from Hezekiah, 'This day is a day of trouble, . . . for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth?' (Isaiah 37:3). Shall God's people, giving so hilariously, be laid low in the final hour; like a woman drained dry of strength to give birth? Shall we fail our God because there are those who can and should give now are still withholding? Your vow made before God is now brushed aside? As it is said, self help, with God's help, is the best help, may this be your pastor's last appeal in our struggle to take Beulah Land."

Praise the Lord, in one morning, the 8.00 am service gave and loaned \$44,960 and the 10.00 am service \$417,882.85. Hallelujah, the target sum was oversubscribed by \$80,000.

And so, Beulah House came into our hands. Since April 30, 1990 this handsome property has been renovated and refurbished so that it becomes not only an auxiliary house for Church and College where all the fellowships have each found a 'den' of their own and FEBC married students their quarters, but also a hospice for passing through missionaries and Christian workers and everyone who needs a temporary roof over his head. The blessings are mutual. There is a Chinese proverb, "He who never has a guest in his house will not find a host abroad."

Five Foreign Language Services

Continuing the story of Church growth on the local scene, five foreign language services to cater to the respective nationalities were born to Life Church through FEBC students, 1982-1994.

The first is our Indonesian Service (Kebaktian Indonesia), February 7, 1982. Six FEBC students and the principal prayed together under a mutual burden seeing there were so many Indonesians coming to Singapore.

Today the Indonesian Service has an attendance of 35-45. Elder and Mrs Charlie Chia are the mainstay of the little flock. The pulpit has been a training ground to Indonesian FEBC students.

The other two that sprouted in 1983, one after the other, were the Tamil and Thai Services. The Tamil Service was started by Stephen Masila, an African student. This service has now shifted to Rehoboth, centre of the Tamil Services. The Thai Service was founded by Prachan, a Thai student who is now a lecturer in US. This service flourishes at the Beulah House and is ministered often by visiting missionaries.

The fourth one is an after service Filipina Bible Class taught by Tai Ji Chung, now assisted by Eduardo Morante, soon graduating from FEBC with a BRE (1996).

The fifth is a Burmese Service run by two graduate students from Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology taking the MRE at FEBC, Titus and Thawng.

Maranatha

Maranatha B-P Church was born out of a desire from many in Life B-P Church to maintain a continuous witness in the British built chapel called the Saint George's Chapel in Changi Village.



Maranatha B-P Church worshipping in St George's Chapel

Rev Timothy Tow, Rev Patrick Tan, Preacher Wee Eng Moh, Dn Yiew Pong Sen and Elder George Tan felt the urge to fill in the gap left by Shalom B-P Church when she moved to her new church premises at Pasir Ris. The MCF (Military Christian Fellowship), trustee of the chapel, was encouraged to see that the vacated chapel be put to good use. At the 4th Thanksgiving Anniversary of the Church (23 October 1994), two well-written articles on the history and progress of the Church were printed to commemorate the occasion. Thomas Liaw traced the history of the church in the YAF Newsletter from her birth on 16 September 1990. Deacon Jack Sin wrote on Maranatha's indebtedness to Life Church's decentralisation programme that led to Maranatha's becoming her 39th offshoot. The attendance by 1995 had risen to 60.

Rev Wee Eng Moh who was with us in the beginning has branched out to form Berean B-P Church. Rev Colin Wong who

succeeded him is now studying in the States at Biblical Theological Seminary. Deacon Jack Sin is graduating from FEBC with the MDiv, May 1995. He is Maranatha's pastor designate. Elder George Tan is chairman of the Church Committee.

Berean

Preacher Wee Eng Moh left Maranatha BPC in December 1991. There followed a season of soul searching as he took up a job to augment the family financially. He worked as a construction supervisor.

However, the work of the Lord remained foremost in his heart. Preacher Wee started a Saturday afternoon Bible study group in his home with a regular attendance of about eight people. He desired to return to the ministry.

After three months, Preacher Wee approached Rev Ronny Khoo to start an afternoon service at Tabernacle BPC premises in Tampines. Rev Khoo was happy that together they could evangelise the people in Tampines New Town. Both then went to see the Pastor of Life Church for advice. Praise the Lord, Rev Tow gave his blessing and Berean BPC was inaugurated in March 1992.

Today it has a regular attendance of 30. With the pastor ordained in September 1994 the work of the Church has gone on more smoothly. Michael Sing was the first deacon to be ordained at Christmas 1994. Nancie Koo is our first member to study at Far Eastern Bible College, July 1994.

Into All the World

Hitherto, except for **Kelapa Sawit**, the twenty offshoots mentioned above are sprouted on the Home Front. Let the reader now take a flying visit to the Churches and stations raised up in

various foreign countries by Life Church policy of “Accelerated Missions.” In the light of His soon coming has not our Lord hastened us, “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). And the order of advancement is given in 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 Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

No sooner was Life Church English Service (our Jerusalem) founded in October 1950 than the congregation began to send the pastor and Deacon Hsu Chiang Tai to Malaysia (our Judea), and thereafter to Indonesia (our Samaria) and to the uttermost part of the earth.

Malaysia

The missionary tours which began as early as 1951 resulted in the founding of **Jemaluang** Gospel Station with Miss Adeline Char, 1953 and the taking over of **Kelapa Sawit**, 1954. From 1956-64 the pastor was moderator of the English Service of **Batu Pahat** Church, but it was God’s higher plan to send him on to **Rawang** across the Muar River and to the English Service of Muar Trinity Church in 1966.

As a result of diverting from Batu Pahat to Muar, the pastor was led to build a new Church for Rawang in 1972.

Having accomplished his mission to the Muar sector, the Lord led his servant to acquire a property in a housing estate at Kulai Besar in 1973. With the conversion of David Wong Wee Tet, son of the soil who was called to study at Chin Lien and FEBC, **Kulai Besar** has become a pivotal church serving Chinese B-P Churches both in Malaysia and Singapore.

1983 saw Life Church advancing **beyond the Malaysian capital** with the establishment of a church at **Taman Sri Melati (Ipoh Road)** in cooperation with Rev Liew Hon Seng, an FEBC graduate and Mrs Liew, a graduate of Chin Lien. After Taman Sri Melati, the Liewes bravely bought a corner flat at **Selayang Segar** near Batu Caves. This is now known as Peace B-P Church.

Meanwhile a work was started at **Bukit Batu**, 33 miles Kulai Road, which induced Life Church to purchase 25,000 square feet of land for RM25,000. Following this a “double” corner house was acquired in 1986 at **Air Bemban**, 29 miles Kulai Road, at the instance of Mrs John Ling. Today Air Bemban has a flourishing kindergarten and growing congregation. Both Air Bemban and Kelapa Sawit are regularly ministered by Elder Sng Teck Leong.

From Rawang the youth of the Church advanced 13 miles inland to **Bukit Gambir** to start a Sunday School and kindergarten. This spontaneous outreach there has resulted today in the establishment of a church and kindergarten in a spacious two-storey corner terrace house, bought at a very good price.

With the graduation of Rev Koa Keng Woo from FEBC in 1987, a **Muar** B-P Church was founded on the premises of a relative’s compound house.

In 1993 Rev John Ling of Kelapa Sawit was invited to reopen a defunct Chinese Presbyterian Church in **Kemaman**, Trengganu. (The Church at Kelapa Sawit, nevertheless, carried on with Miss Ng Sang Chiew, who had been with them well over a decade). Rev Ling requested Life Church to send preachers to help reopen the English Section. The pulpit needed to be supplied three weeks of the month. This we have been maintaining without a hitch since July 1994 under Dr Jeffrey Khoo.

In the course of our outreach to Kemaman the idea of starting an independent mission work for Life Church in **Kuantan**, capital of Pahang State, crossed our mind. Through Rev Ling a handsome

property of 6951 square feet with a semi-detached two-storey house of 2444 feet is acquired at RM150,000. This valuable property from the Lord is now being renovated for the founding of a Life B-P Kindergarten which should be developed into a Church in the days to come. This is our latest advance in Malaysia. “Who will go for us?” (Isaiah 6:8).

Indonesia

After two decades the Lord began to lead us to Indonesia in the name of the ICCC. March 1971 saw the two senior pastors on a maiden voyage to Pontianak, West Kalimantan. While Rev Quek concentrated development on the northern sector, the Life Church pastor worked with Rev Andreas Djunaidi in the south.

The work with Djunaidi began in 1978 with the building of a Gospel boat 55 feet long at the cost of S\$50,000. This enabled the resourceful pastor-cum-navigator to sail the Kapuas, Indonesia’s biggest river to sow the Gospel seed “upon many waters” (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

After three years the Lord led him to acquire land adjoining a resettlement village inhabited by refugees from the 1967 Dyak massacre of Chinese living in the rural areas. Here he established a kindergarten, church and orphanage. By acquiring more land for Djunaidi at a very favourable price, we helped him build a primary school and finally a three-storey block for the founding of a Far Eastern Bible Institute. While the Bible Institute had to close down after several years, the building nevertheless is now used for a Christian High School with a regular evening Bible class.

By 1987 Djunaidi became self-supporting and self-propagating. During the intervening years he has founded five churches along the Kapuas River under his own steam. He now visits Kuching bi-monthly to maintain Sharon Rose B-P Church, the mission outreach of Sharon.



Far Eastern Bible Institute, Pontianak

The same year that we entered West Kalimantan the Lord led us to Tanjung Pinang in the Riau Islands. That was August 1973. A Presbyterian Church founded by Rev Tan Peng Koen, it was committed to our care when the old pastor retired to Taiwan. To this day Tanjung Pinang is closely affiliated with us. Rev Bob Phee and Rev Koa Keng Woo have joined our pastoral team the last several years. From Tanjung Pinang we branched out in 1990 to Tanjung Uban, employing Preacher Chia Jung Kong and his wife. Several families have since been won to the Lord.

December 1989 saw Life Church establishing a beachhead on Batam Island, only a half hour by speedboat from Singapore. Our missionary to this day is Roska Choi from Medan, an FEBC graduate. Roska has lent much support to Calvary's branch in Batam. She herself has built two wooden churches for the kampong people on the principle of staying with them and ministering to them on the spot. Her parishioners are mostly Bataks.

In 1972 we made a first contact with Medan, North Sumatra. From this beginning the Siregar family has been brought into our fellowship. Dohar the eldest son came to be trained at FEBC in 1974. After he returned upon graduation, he led his father to the Lord. A changed man, his father became fired with a zeal to extend the Gospel to Kuta Baru in the mountains. Thus Kuta Baru B-P Church was built, and Bapa Siregar ordained to the ministry. Bapa is a retired Government servant. He has a good command of English.

Two younger brothers, Haposan and Agus, were sent to FEBC in 1980. Having graduated, they also returned to help develop the work in Medan. Today Dohar and Haposan are ordained ministers and each heads a thriving Christian enterprise with a church ministry. Dohar has his own property with our help. He and wife Gloria, another FEBC graduate, run an orphanage and kindergarten, apart from the regular church services.

Haposan “inherits” the old church property which Galilee had bought for the Medan Mission. With the acquisition of adjacent land twice the size of the old church property, Haposan has built a primary school which now has an enrolment of 500. Apart from the old church Haposan also runs a big Sunday school and youth work.

Agus has been faithfully manning the Kuta Baru Church until recently when Galilee helped him to buy land at Belawan, port of Medan, with the view of building a proper church.

With help from Life Church and FEBC, a Fundamental Bible Institute of Indonesia was founded in 1994. Dohar was appointed principal and the rest of the family pooling their resources together, the school was launched with seven students in the presence of the FEBC principal and his wife.

The Bible Presbyterian Church of Indonesia is now recognised with the Indonesian Government. The vista of Gospel

outreach, “accelerated missions,” to the rest of Indonesia is bright. The latest opening is Djakarta. Should Yusniar answer the call after her graduation in November 1995, the Kebaktian (Indonesian Service) would adopt her as their missionary.

Thailand

Having made several visits to North Thailand including sending Jess Lim, FEBC graduate (1984) to the hill tribes, Life Church established a Student Centre (now become Life B-P Church) in Chiangmai, 1991. Nirand Tamee came to FEBC to be trained and was married to Jess to form a husband and wife team. They have two children.

The work they had started in an ideal two-storey compound house is now becoming congested. So they have launched their own building fund on the principle, “Self help with God’s help is the best help.” The Tamees are yearly visited by Life Church young people who bring them no little encouragement. Nirand being now ordained has found greater facility in the execution of the Lord’s work.

Philippines

Through the ICCC the pastor and his wife began to be invited to Manila in 1985, first to teach at Rev Ormeo’s Bible Institute and then at the Dan Ebert School for graduates.

In the course of years we became more involved in the work of their graduates, who became pastors of small congregations. Small because they had no bigger place to worship than in private homes. This gave rise to Life Church’s burden to help three young pastors build three churches. The first one involved also the acquisition of government land. All in all we gave a quarter million to build these three churches. When American Baptists heard that Bible-Presbyterians of Singapore had built three

Filipino Baptist Churches, they were amazed. This is possible by John Sung's more liberal view on baptism, "More faith less water. Less faith, more water." "For Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the gospel" (I Corinthians 1:17). To Lifers, the Baptist doctrine of immersion does not hamper us in the advancement of missions.

Thus, when Dan Ebert's Hilltop Project was launched, our church unstintingly sent Charles and Frieda Seet as our missionaries. While Calvary's help in finance is great for which we praise the Lord, our living witnesses to the Filipino people is no less. Philippines is one very fruitful field in our extension of God's kingdom.

Adelaide

Our contribution to Hope B-P Church is in the acquisition of the Stone Mansion by way of counsel and encouragement. When the pastor was invited to speak at Hope's Bible Camp in December 1991 he was asked to go shopping for a church, for the members felt the time had come to own one they could worship in without the hassle of arranging chairs and shifting other church furniture to prepare for Sunday worship. Hitherto they were meeting at a gymnasium.

Two small churches for sale were looked into but neither one impressed us. When we "accidentally" stumbled on the Stone Mansion, a Catholic Institution for the rehabilitation of unwed mothers now closed down for months, it was a case of "love at first sight." In order to boost their Building Fund which stayed in the doldrums of A\$30,000, Life Church pledged to almost double it. By faith, Hope Church worked hard to obtain this property, which was now pegged at A\$850,000.

After a year of waiting the hour chimed for us to possess it. With a handsome gift from a sister of Life Church and liberal



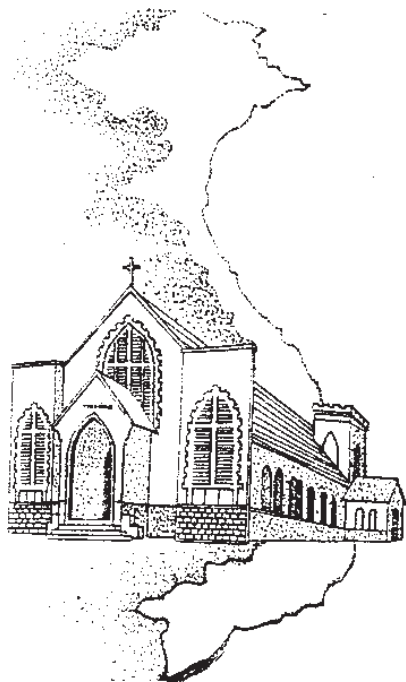
Hope B-P Church

sums loaned by Sharon, New Life and Calvary Jaya and gifts from various quarters the deal was closed.

The Stone Mansion in Adelaide today stands as a trophy truly of Faith, Hope and Love as they assiduously work together to pay off their interest-free loans. The attendance has increased, the offerings have multiplied, the premises are used for camps even by B-Ps from Singapore and distant places in Australia such as Melbourne. “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

Vietnam

Through Mr Michael Lim, father of Seen Seen, a long-service secretary of Life Church, the pastor and his wife visited Vietnam during Chinese New Year 1995. They were warmly received by the “Open” churches, both Chinese and Vietnamese, descendants



of the converts of Christian and Missionary Alliance Mission (1902). As a result of this contact Life Church has become a home away from home to Vietnamese pastors visiting Singapore.

We also contacted leaders of the House Churches an indigenous Christian movement that sprouted after the fall of Saigon, 1975. Today there are 330 House Churches spread all over Vietnam, not the least among the Montagnards (mountain dwellers).

Now that Vietnam has joined ASEAN, it is hoped that a way will be opened for young Vietnamese pastors to come to FEBC for training. All national Bible schools are closed to this day. Nevertheless the Lord has paved a new and a living way for His people to our city of enlightenment.

On our part, there is the preparation of a medical mission headed by Dr David Cheong of the Missionary Fellowship to minister to the Hill Tribes, Christmas, 1995.

Through Vietnam there has come also an invitation to visit Cambodia, where Teochew is a means of communication with the domiciled Chinese.

Burma

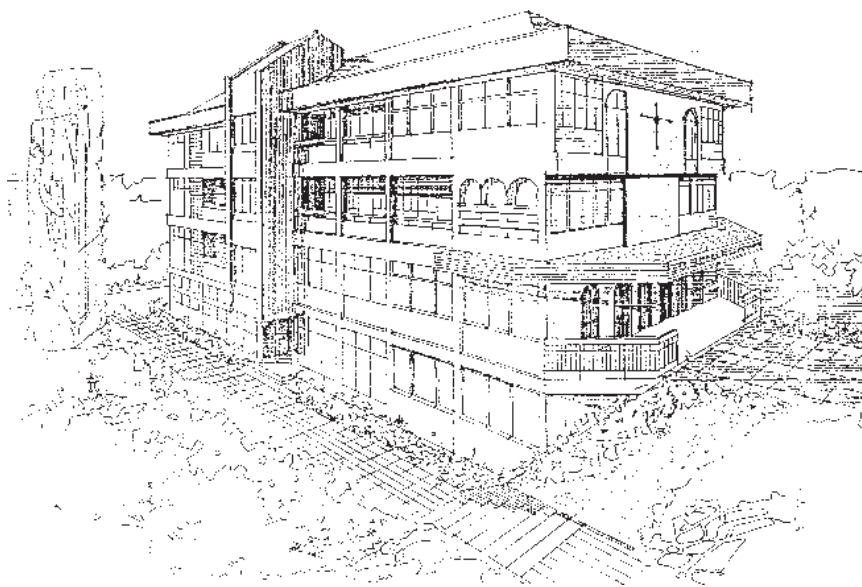
Through the President of the ICCC, Rev Robert Thawm Luai made a first contact with us in 1986. With much difficulty he found his way to Singapore to take a semester's refresher course at FEBC.

Rev Thawm Luai is founder of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Burma with a fellowship of 25 churches totalling 3,000 members. As there was no Bible school in Burma where young people of his church could get training he appealed to us for help. Responding to this request we help him establish a Far Eastern Fundamental School of Theology in 1987 in Rangoon (Yangon).

Since the founding of FEFST, through years of political turmoil and hindrance, the Lord has seen the School through three graduations, totalling 45. A fourth graduation will be held February 1996 with a batch of 15. These are and will be sent to pastor churches with the Evangelical Presbyterian fellowship and to open up new frontiers of faith.

With courage and foresight Thawm Luai bought land adjacent to the one we have acquired for him in order to erect a proper building to house an increasing number of students. The enrolment today is over 70. This extra piece of land is large enough to erect a four-storey block the size of Life Church minus the front porch. Its total cost is S\$450,000, the price of a Singapore five-room flat. See how much more your Sing dollar can do in extending God's Kingdom abroad! Dr Victor Lim, a friend of our Church and College who visited Thawm Luai remarked, "Whatever you've put into Burma has turned into refined gold."

As the book goes to press FEBC is organising a contingent to the Dedication of the new building and to their 4th Graduation Service at Chinese New Year 1996. Not only Thawm Luai is our man in Burma, there is also Andrew Kam, another FEBCer. With



New FEFST Building, Yangon

great strides of faith he has founded an orphanage and a B-P Church in Yangon. Currently he is building a church at Tui Khal, his home town, many hundred miles north of Yangon.

Sabah

Hitherto BPs have occupied West Malaysia with 15 outreaches, and one in Sarawak. With the latest advance to Sabah at Lahat Datu, our occupation of both West and East Malaysia is positionally complete.

Jeffrey Foo, a convert of Kulai BPC since the seventies, is manager of the Sri Tenang Estate. He is now posted to Lahat Datu, Sabah where he finds Christians in this new estate. In order to cater to their needs he has converted a meeting hall into a proper chapel.

To evangelise the non-Christian estate labourers he has invited Rev David Wong of Kulai Besar. To complement the



preaching, David has enlisted Rev Djunaidi of Pontianak, Life Church's roving missionary to Sarawak, who speaks the language of the people. His Indonesian is easily understood in Sabah.

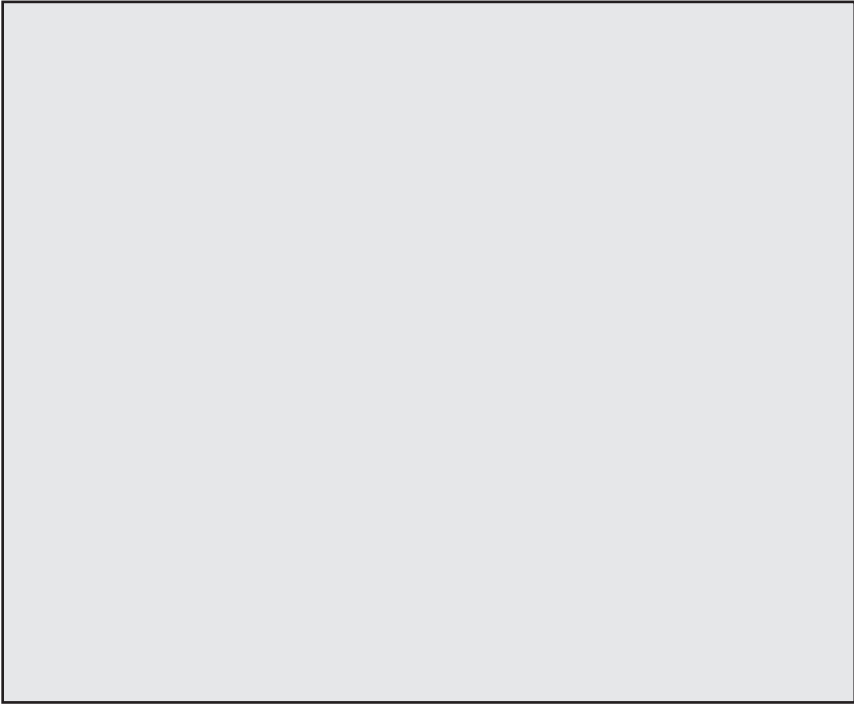
The two evangelists are scheduled to fly to Kota Kinabalu Sept 5, '95 from whence they will converge on Lahat Datu. After the evangelistic campaign, Rev Djunaidi will stay on for three weeks to nurture the newly-formed congregation. A beachhead is now established in this far off corner of Sabah. Pray that this work will be sustained in the days ahead.

Holy Land

1996 will be our 7th Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Why do we go there year after year? Not only to see the Land but also the people—our American missionary friends and Palestinian brothers and sisters in Christ—members of the Baraka Bible Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem.

By our regular visits to Baraka Conference Centre, a Hospice for pilgrims, we have strengthened their case for qualification as a Government-approved Tourist Centre. Praise the Lord, they have now been licensed!

By our regular visits to the Palestinian Church we have strengthened their faith, also by practical means. We have not only been involved in the ordination of the pastor and a deacon, but also in the acquisition of a piece of land at the Shepherd's Field, Beit Sahour for the building of a new church.



Baraka Conference Centre

“Go into all the world” was uttered from a hill in the Holy Land, and so the apostles set out to evangelise . . . until the Gospel came to our shores. Today, Singapore Christians have received the baton in the Gospel relay, and who could have thought that Lifers would make a full circle to return to the Land of our Saviour’s birth?! Behold, He comes! “This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Even so, come Lord Jesus. Amen.

Chapter X

A DISSENTIOUS SPIRIT THAT LED TO THE DISSOLUTION OF SYNOD, OCTOBER 30, 1988

Writing in the second edition of *In His Good Time: The story of the Church in Singapore, 1819-1992*, Dr Bobby E K Sng commented:

One of the saddest episodes in the '80s must surely be the dissolution of the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore. Begun in the '50s, this church played a historic role in battling liberal theology. Its crusading spirit and strong evangelistic stance ensured rapid growth in the '60s and '70s. By the late '80s, it had started 25 churches with a total membership in excess of 6,000. However, with growth, internal differences also arose. Its relentless call for believers to separate themselves from what it considered to be non-fundamental churches and new-evangelicals, brought a mixed response. Not all agreed on the rigid, narrow definition of 'separation'. In a statement issued on 30 October 1988 describing its voluntary dissolution, the B-P Church declared:

“The decision was arrived at after much prayerful consideration and discussion over certain protracted issues. These issues centred mainly on strong differences in interpreting the Doctrine of Biblical Separation,

Fundamentalism, and Neo-Evangelicalism. Concerted attempts were made during the past two years at reconciliation through personal discussions and formal meetings. Even a moratorium failed to resolve these differences and break the impasse. Dissolution is accepted as the last resort.”

Responding to the Dissolution in “Carmel Weekly” November 6 1988, Rev David W F Wong writes:

The Synod at its meeting last Sunday night accepted, by an overwhelming majority, the proposal to dissolve the Synod and the B-P Church of Singapore.

However, the individual B-P churches, being separately registered with the Government, will continue to exist with their respective names and autonomy. Because the B-P Church has, from its inception, practised a strict policy of decentralisation, the dissolution of the denominational body does not spell the end of the individual churches. Mt Carmel B-P Church and our congregations will go on without any structural disruption or change. In fact, the dissolution is seen as the breaking of a deadlock so that our churches can move ahead with the Lord’s work without being bogged down by controversy.

We have simply agreed to disagree, and to part in peace. The question has been raised as to whether dissolution is ever a biblical answer to a problem. Is dissolution like divorce a sin? The answer is No. While divorce is a violation of the marriage vows before God, dissolution is no breach of any such vows. The coming together of individuals or organisational bodies is so that we may serve God more effectively. If that purpose is lost, and we find we can serve God more effectively apart, then so be it.

In Scriptures we have examples of the parting of ways of people who are no longer able to work together: Abraham and Lot (Genesis 13:5-11), Paul and Barnabas

(Acts 15:36-41). Even the two great apostles, Peter and Paul, agreed they should concentrate on different fields as the Lord had called them (Galatians 2:6-10). As one B-P minister rightly puts it, “It is no shame to tell our people that we have tried our best to resolve our differences, and we have failed.” . . .

Now, while the “decision was arrived at after much prayerful consideration and discussion over certain protracted issues, these issues centred mainly on strong differences in interpreting the Doctrine of Biblical Separation, Fundamentalism and Neo-Evangelicalism.” But there were other issues accumulated that must be recalled “for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come” (I Corinthians 10:11).

The first of these accumulated issues was “tongues.” In the words of Dr Tow Siang Hwa:

From May 1986 to Dec 1987 Synod committees studied, met, debated through a dozen or more meetings. The matter even became a major item on the agenda of the 7th Annual B-P Conference on Cameron Highlands Sept 7-11, 1987. For three days it was a ding-dong battle. The outcome of these long and tedious debates was this: The Zion-Carmel combination maintained that tongues had not ceased, and that these were “meaningful ecstatic utterances.”

Subsequent Synod meetings produced no satisfactory outcome. As it became increasingly clear that a liberal faction was firmly entrenched within the Synod, and no solution could be made, Calvary BPC decided to withdraw from Synod in March 1988. . . .

As for this writer, he was so moved by the Cameron Highlands ordeal that he wrote a 126-page book to refute tongue-speaking from the Autobiography of Wang Ming Tao. In the preface to this book, *Wang Ming Tao and Charismatism*, he says:

The tide of Charismatism is coming in so strong today that it has splashed into the Bible-Presbyterian Church of Singapore. At its Annual Pastors and Leaders Conference on Cameron Highlands September 1987, certain younger leaders maintained that while the tongues of Pentecost (Acts 2) had ceased, those mentioned of the Corinthian Church (I Cor 12 and 14) have not. Today they continue in the Church as “meaningful ecstatic utterances.” Now, these tongues are required by Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal Churches of their members as evidence of baptism by the Holy Spirit, but are repudiated by Fundamental Churches that hold to the Reformed tradition.

Insofar as the writer is concerned, he and senior colleagues of the B-P Church had gone through the mighty revival meetings led by Dr John Sung in Singapore 1935. The working of the Holy Spirit was so manifest that hundreds came to the Lord, confessing their sins in tears of repentance and restitution. Drunkards and opiumsmokers, cigarette chain-smokers, were delivered snap from their iron-clad shackles. Feuding elders and deacons were melted down in mutual forgiveness and reconciliation. The Church Hall at Telok Ayer Street, where John Sung preached, suddenly became a powerhouse of prayer and praise, of hearty singing and joyful release—but there was no speaking in tongues.

As the Almighty Father has favoured the Chinese Church with several such visitations of Holy Spirit Revival, the writer made a thorough search into the ministry of other mighty evangelists beginning from William Chalmers Burns to Jonathan Goforth, to Miss Dora Yu and to Ting Li Mei, known as the “Moody of China, With One Thousand Souls a Month.” In none of their Spirit-filled ministries was there any mention of tongues.

As he further researched into the life and work of Wang Ming Tao, China’s greatest saint and living martyr still going strong at 89, he was delighted to discover how

though Wang Ming Tao was immersed by a Pentecostal preacher, he soon repudiated his teachings, especially visions and tongues. This he has testified in his autobiography, "These Fifty Years," which is recently translated by Arthur Reynolds into English under the title "A Stone Made Smooth," and published by Mayflower.

In making known Wang Ming Tao's deliverance from Charismatism to the English world we have chosen a Reynolds' translation than making our own. Obviously, such third party witness adds credence to our report.

Indeed, the issue on tongues, unless restated here, would soon be forgotten. Alas, those younger leaders who spoke for tongues have not receded. One of them now sits in high council with them who are well known charismatic leaders (1995).

Other deviations from plain Bible truths taught by the same B-P minister in the name of "scholarship" (see *Focus*, 1974), that shook the faith of the Church are, to quote just a few, as follows:-

Quote A: "Some of the OT accounts have parallels in other literatures. These in no way detract from the truth of the OT account because it was most likely the true one."

Comment: The Bible's absolute inerrancy is destroyed by the words "most likely the true one."

Quote B: ". . . there must be some other explanation for 'years' in Genesis. eg if years = months, then Noah's 950 years were in fact 950 months."

Comment: God's Word said "years," but FOCUS says "months." Who is speaking the truth?

Quote C: "There are some matters which cannot be ascertained because we have no way of determining the facts of the case . . . was the Flood over the whole world or only on a part of it?"

Comment: Genesis Chapters 6, 7, 9 stated the "facts of the case" ten times and more, in words which even a child

understands, allowing no room for doubt. Further, read 2 Pet 3:1-13 whose inspired commentary on the Flood, is it not in cosmic dimensions? FOCUS has undermined the clear record of God's Word and evidently had not read 2 Pet 3:1-13!

The Statement on Dissolution of the B-P Synod continues where Dr Bobby Sng left off:

With the dissolution of the B-P Synod, each B-P Church nevertheless continues to retain its autonomy by virtue of its individual registration with the Government. Each B-P Church is answerable to God Almighty and to the Lord Jesus Christ, Head of the Church Universal. May this parting of ways bring an end to a deadlock that has hindered the progress of the BPCS. And may God help each individual B-P Church hold fast to the precious Biblical Separatist and Fundamentalist position, till He comes. Amen.

Now having read Chapter IX on the "Period of Multi-Developments at Home and Abroad, 1971-1995" (B-P Churches now parted each to her own way), there is one who having repudiated B-Pism is bold enough to state her as an "Independent." If B-Ps are true to their name they will heed the words of Dr S H Tow in the Annual Record of Calvary Bible-Presbyterian Church (1994), as follows:

WHAT'S A "B-P"?

The name of the game today is to play by rules of one's own making. Time-honoured names continue to be worn by those who play a different game. Let us take a look at three examples which well drive home the point.

Example One : The Reformed Church in Plano, Texas

Our friends the Dancers returned to the US in July went looking for a Bible-believing church. At the Reformed

Church in Plano they were given some pamphlets. We quote:

We are the oldest Protestant denomination in America. We arrived in 1620 and settled in what is now known as New York City.

We are part of the “Reformed” family . . . which includes Presbyterians, Disciples of Christ and many other denominations. We have the name **Reformed** because our history goes back to the Reformation in the early 1500s. . . .

“Reformed” is a tradition of positive Christian authors and ministers such as Dr Norman Vincent Peale and Dr Robert Schuller.

Needless to say the Dancers, as true Bible-Presbyterians, took the pamphlets and their departure. Some reader may ask, *Why?* What’s wrong with the church?

Answer: Nothing wrong with the name “Reformed” except when it means what it is not meant to mean!

What does “Reformed” mean?

It means Protestant, especially Calvinist, and distinctly separate from and opposed to the Church of Rome. This, very briefly, is what “Reformed” has always stood for, and should stand for.

Now what does “Reformed Church in Plano” stand for? From the pamphlet we understand that the church is in agreement with the “positive tradition” of two men, Norman Vincent Peale and Robert Schuller, both known throughout the Christian world.

The key to our present discussion is for us to take a look at the theology and practice of the two men.

Dr Norman Vincent Peale

Norman Vincent Peale was ordained in the United Church of Christ, got his “power of positive thinking” ideas from the Unity healing cult, and became president of the Reformed Church of America in 1984. The latter is also Robert Schuller’s (the “Peale of the West”) church. *Peale’s Positive Imaging* book teaches visualization and other occultic/New Age ideas. Peale is a liberal and a Mason who rejects key Bible doctrines. He called the virgin birth “some theological idea” of no importance to salvation and denies the necessity of being born again (Dave Hunt’s book). He praised Mormon president Spencer Kimball in a keynote address in Kimball’s 1980 birthday party. Billy Graham has endorsed Peale, whose Marble Collegiate Church received the most referral cards in Graham’s 1957 NY Crusade. [Source: Calvary Contender (CC), *Volume VII, Number 19, Oct 1, 1990*]

Dr Robert Schuller

“Possibility Thinking” guru Robert Schuller was quoted at the Pope’s 9/87 US visit as saying: “It’s time for Protestants to go to the shepherd (Pope) and say ‘what do we have to do to come home?’” More recently he made a special trip to Rome to ask the Pope’s blessing on the building plans for his Crystal Cathedral (3-4/90 *Foundation*). Schuller commends the Jesuits as “a wonderful organization of godly men . . .” and calls them “dear brothers in Christ.” Former Jesuit Malachi Martin says Jesuits are “the Pope’s men” engaged in a “war of death” against Christianity and democracy . . .” (7-9/90 *Watch!*) Schuller has in recent times been linked with pro-Soviet billionaire Armand Hammer. [Source: CC, *Volume VII, Number 18, Sept 15, 1990*]

Popular TV speaker Robert Schuller laments: “I don’t think anything has been done in the name of Christ . . . that has proven more destructive to human personality, and

hence counter-productive to the evangelistic enterprise, than the unchristian, uncouth strategy of attempting to make people aware of their lost and sinful condition” (Horton, 78). He says the purpose of the Cross was to “sanctify the ego trip” (ibid, 81). He said “The most serious sin is the one that causes me to say, ‘I am unworthy . . .’,” and “The Christ Spirit dwells in every human being whether the person knows it or not” (9/91 *Aust. Beacon*). [Source: CC, *Volume.IX, Number 3, Feb 1, 1992*]

So, what’s wrong with the Reformed Church in Plano?

Answer: By their association with unbelieving liberal ministers (wolves in sheep’s clothing, Matt 7:15), they have approved their unscriptural, heretical beliefs, and given credibility to their false teachings.

Example Two : The New Evangelicals of America

In a joint declaration with leading Catholics, a group of Evangelicals publicly declared: “Evangelicals and Catholics Together” (see main article on page 5). In a historic document, the Evangelicals declare to the world, a) the antagonism and separation of over four centuries is over; b) doctrinal differences which used to divide are of no real consequence; c) evangelicals, Catholics are Christians, brothers and sisters of one common faith.

By implication the Declaration demolishes all further ground for division between Christians, between “conservatives” and “liberals,” between “evangelicals” and “Catholics.” The Declaration is a monumental breakthrough for ecumenical union, and puts the fundamentalist-separatists in total isolation.

Who are the Evangelical Endorsers of the Declaration?

Naturally we are interested to know the names of those individuals and institutions backing the Declaration.

- a. Charles Colson of Prison Fellowship was one of two key men who initiated the consultation leading to the formulation of the Declaration.
- b. Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ, a leading promoter of ecumenical union.
- c. James I Packer, professor at Regent College, Vancouver, renowned theologian and advocate of union with Rome.
- d. Pat Robertson of Regent University, and president of National Broadcasters Association, another front runner in the ecumenical race.
- e. John White, National Association of Evangelicals.
- f. Institutions named include the Southern Baptist Convention, Wheaton College, and Fuller Theological Seminary.

All the above-named individuals and institutions come under the classification “**Evangelical.**”

Question: What do we mean by the term “Evangelical”?

Answer: It means (or, it used to mean) conservative, Bible-believing, Protestant, as distinct and separate from (a) the liberal-modernist faction in Protestantism, and (b) the Roman Catholic Church. The Evangelical of yesterday saw no salvation in these two groupings in Christendom, ie liberal-modernist and Catholic, and therefore kept strictly apart from them.

That was up until a generation ago.

Then Dr Harold Ockenga in his famous manifesto called the Evangelicals to break with traditional “Separatism,” and to return to the Christian mainstream, to engage in active theological debate and dialogue, and to assert their influence in society. That was in 1948. To this

new movement, he coined the name “**New Evangelicalism.**”

Ockenga’s call was championed by Dr Billy Graham who left his original “fundamentalist” position and took America and the world by storm with his brand of mass “**ecumenical evangelistic crusades.**” Over the course of three decades, in gradual stages and by slow wearing down of resistance, the groundwork was laid for the reunification of Christians of all beliefs and practices by the ecumenical process which we are witnessing now.

Example Three : The Bible-Presbyterians (B-Ps)

The B-Ps originated from Life Bible-Presbyterian Church (1950) to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

The B-P founding charter was “Biblical Separation” (article 6 of the B-P Constitution). Parts of Article 6 are quoted below to aid our present discussion.

Article 6 – Principle and Practice of Biblical Separation

- 6.1 The doctrine of separation from sin unto God is a fundamental principle of the Bible, one grievously ignored in the church today.
- 6.5 It is the duty all true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ to make a clear testimony of their faith in Him, especially in these darkening days of apostasy in many professing churches, by which apostasy whole denominations in their official capacity, as well as individual churches, have been swept into a paganising stream of modernism under various names and in varying degrees.
- 6.9 We are opposed to all efforts to obscure or wipe out the clear line of separation between these absolutes: truth and error, light and darkness. (See Jer 5:20, 2

Cor 6:14-18). We refer to such efforts by New Evangelicals, Charismatic Christians, promoters of ecumenical co-operative evangelism and of the social gospel, and all churches and other movements and organisations that are aligned with or sympathetic to the Ecumenical Movement.

At the risk of being repetitious, let the B-P position be reworded:

A true B-P is opposed to all efforts to obscure or wipe out the clear line of separation between B-Ps and New Evangelicals, Charismatics, promoters of ecumenical cooperative evangelism, promoters of the liberal-modernist social gospel, and all links with the Ecumenical Movement.

As the B-P Movement grew, and younger men went overseas and imbibed liberal and New Evangelical theology, a deviant spirit began to creep into the B-P Church. While wearing the B-P name these were playing the New Evangelical game.

Reasonings and persuasions fell on deaf ears. “The situation became worse and worse,” said the B-P founding pastor (*Banner*, Oct-Dec 1988). “At every Synod meeting there was a tussle . . . it was a tussle between Fundamentalism and New Evangelicalism.”

In October 1988 it was breaking point: the B-P Synod was dissolved, bringing to a close a chapter of the B-P Movement.

It was the “Day of Drift”—October 30 1988. Freed from all constraints each B-P Church hewed its own line, mapped its own course. As in the days of the Judges, “. . . every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judg 17:6).

Six Years After Dissolution

Six years after their Biblical fundamentalist moorings were cut, some B-P ships are sailing with the New Evangelical current into the ecumenical mainstream—an inevitable “sea change” for those of a different spirit.

We see, then, the emergence of a different brand of B-Ps, perhaps best called “New B-Ps” who continue to wear the B-P name but play the New Evangelical game.

Unless these new players have altered their Constitution Article on Biblical Separation, they are playing a double game.

EPILOGUE

This Singapore B-P Church Story covers but a short duration of years, from 1950 to 1995. It resembles the years of Israel's Wilderness Journey, though short, but full of exploits and mighty outworkings of the Almighty God. Lest Israel "forgot His works and His wonders that He had shewed them" (Psalm 78:11), Asaph the Psalmist said:

I will open my mouth in a parable:

I will utter dark sayings of old:

Which we have heard and known,

And our fathers have told us.

We will not hide them from their children

Shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD,

And his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done...

That the generation to come might know them

Even the children which should be born

Who should arise and declare them to their children:

That they might set their hope in God,

And not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

Psalm 78:2-7

For the same reasons this writer has been moved to relate *The Singapore B-P Church Story* to students at the Evening Class of Far Eastern Bible College that "they might set their hope in God, and might not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments" (Psalm 78:7). For when the B-P Church came to her 38th year as did Israel from Kadesh Barnea to the brook Zered

(Deuteronomy 2:13), the Synod was dissolved, because of dissensions and deviations. “Freed from all constraints each B-P Church hewed its own line, mapped its own course. As in the days of the Judges, . . . every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:16). If this statement is challenged, it is good to be reminded that we tend to grow cold from our initial enthusiasm, to deviate from the original pathway. Hence this history of the Singapore B-P Church with its many precious lessons to keep us and our children from straying. It is said that if we do not study history, history will repeat itself.

Although Israel’s Wilderness Journey covered a period of forty years, her roots were deep. Israel before the Exodus were reminded of their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God instructed Moses to speak to the children of Israel, “The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you” (Exodus 3:15). Although our history is only forty-five years, yet our roots of which there are seven reach down to our ancestors in South China, yea, through William Chalmers Burns to Scotland and England in the 1800s, and to the 16th Century Reformation, to Knox and Calvin.

Then there is a big American root that gave birth to our B-Pism, traced through the Bible Presbyterians (USA), to her battles with modernism and liberalism through McIntire, and J Gresham Machen going back to the nineteenth century.

As B-Pism was introduced to Singapore by this writer in 1948, and as he belongs to the bridge generation that spans Singapore and China, he is obliged to relate the works of God from days of yore to sons of the Singapore soil. If this history is not put to ink and paper it will soon fade into oblivion.

Now there were two who fully followed the Lord against the ten who gave a dismal report on the Promised Land. Those who

“did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the Lord” (Numbers 14:37). How many in the B-P Church Movement who should remain to this day in the forefront of battle have left us and are little heard of? “Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart” (Judges 5:16).

“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not” (Lamentations 3:22). According to God’s mercies, according to His promise to the two who followed the Lord fully, Joshua and Caleb both lived to a ripe old age. As mentioned earlier Caleb testified to his comrade-in-arms, “And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in” (Joshua 14:10-11). So, the founders and elders of the B-P Church, as many as have fully followed the Lord like Joshua and Caleb, are still active in the Lord’s service to this day. By the mercies of God showered upon them so that they are enabled to stand as examples to the new generation after them, the accounts herein of their exploits must be told to their children’s children. And let it be repeated:

*That they might set their hope in God,
And not forget the works of God,
But keep His Commandments. Amen.*

APPENDIX

THE SEPARATENESS OF THE CHURCH (by J Gresham Machen)

Matthew 5:13—Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

In these words our Lord established at the very beginning the distinctness and separateness of the Church. If the sharp distinction is ever broken down between the Church and the world, then the power of the Church is gone. The Church then becomes like salt that has lost its savour, and is fit only to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.

It is a great principle, and there never has been a time in all the centuries of Christian history when it has not had to be taken to heart. The really serious attack upon Christianity has not been the attack carried on by fire and sword, by the threat of bonds or death, but it has been the more subtle attack that has been masked by friendly words; it has been not the attack from without but the attack from within. The enemy has done his deadliest work when he has come with words of love and compromise and peace. And how persistent the attack has been! Never in the centuries of the Church's life has it been altogether relaxed; always there has been the deadly chemical process, by which, if it had been unchecked, the precious salt would have been merged with the insipidity of the world, and would have been thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.

A Deadly Peril

The process began at the very beginning, in the days when our Lord still walked the Galilean hills. There were many in those days who heard Him gladly: He enjoyed at first the favour of the people. But in that favour He saw a deadly peril; He would have nothing of a half-discipleship that meant the merging of the company of His disciples with the world. How ruthlessly He checked a sentimental enthusiasm! "Let the dead bury their dead," He told the enthusiast who came eagerly to Him but was not willing at once to forsake all. "One thing thou lackest," He said to the rich young ruler, and the young man went sorrowful away. Truly Jesus did not make it easy to be a follower of Him. "He that is not with me," He said, "is against me." "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife and children . . . , he cannot be my disciple." How serious a thing it was in those days to stand for Christ.

And it was a serious thing not only in the sphere of conduct but also in the sphere of thought. There could be no greater mistake than to suppose that a man in those days could think as he liked and still be a follower of Jesus. On the contrary the offence lay just as much in the sphere of doctrine as in the sphere of life. There were "hard sayings," then as now, to be accepted by the disciples of Jesus, as well as hard commands. "I am the bread which came down from heaven," said Jesus. It was indeed a hard saying. No wonder the Jews murmured at Him. "Is not this Jesus," they said, "the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven." "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus did not make the thing easy for these murmurers. "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." At that many even of His disciples were offended. "This is a hard saying," they said; "who can hear it?" And so they left Him. "From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." Many of them went back—but not all. "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Thus was the precious salt preserved.

Then came the gathering clouds, and finally the Cross. In the hour of His agony they all left Him and fled; apparently the movement that He had initiated was hopelessly dead. But such was not the will of God. The

disciples were sifted, but there was still something left. Peter was forgiven; the disciples saw the risen Lord; the salt was still preserved.

One hundred and twenty persons were gathered in Jerusalem. It was not a large company; but salt, if it truly have its savour, can permeate the whole lump. The Spirit came in accordance with our Lord's promise, and Peter preached the first sermon in the Christian Church. It was hardly a concessive sermon. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." How unkind Peter was! But by that merciful unkindness they were pricked in their hearts, and three thousand souls were saved.

So there stood the first Christian Church in the midst of a hostile world. At first sight it might have seemed to be a mere Jewish sect; the disciples continued to attend the temple services and to lead the life of Jews. But in reality that little company was as separate as if it had been shut off by desert wastes or the wide reaches of the sea; an invisible barrier, to be crossed only by the wonder of the new birth, separated the disciples of Jesus from the surrounding world. "Of the rest," we are told, "durst no man join himself to them." "And fear came upon every soul." So it will always be. When the disciples of Jesus are really faithful to their Lord, they inspire fear; even when Christians are despised and persecuted and harried, they have sometimes made their persecutors secretly afraid. It is not so, indeed, when there is compromise in the Christian camp; it is not so when those who minister in the name of Christ have—as was said in praise some time ago in my hearing of a group of ministers in our day—it is not so when those who minister in the name of Christ "have their ears to the ground." But it will be so whenever Christians have their eyes, not to the ground, but open only to the voice of God, and when they say simply, in the face of opposition or flattery, as Peter said, "We must obey God rather than men."

But after those persecutions, there came in the early Church a time of peace—deadly, menacing, deceptive peace, a peace more dangerous by far than the bitterest war. Many of the sect of the Pharisees came into the Church—false brethren privily brought in. They were not true Christians, because they trusted in their own works for salvation, and no man can be a Christian who does that. They were not even true adherents of the Old Covenant; for the Old Covenant, despite the Law, was a preparation for the Saviour's coming, and the Law was a schoolmaster unto Christ. Yet

they were Christians in name, and they tried to dominate the councils of the Church. It was serious menace; for a moment it looked as though even Peter, true apostle though he was at heart, were being deceived. His principles were right, but by his actions his principles, at Antioch, for one fatal moment, were belied. But it was not God's will that the Church should perish; and the man of the hour was there. There was one man who would not consider consequences where a great principle was at stake, who put all personal considerations resolutely aside, and refused to become unfaithful to Christ through any fear of "splitting the Church." "When I saw that they walked not uprightly," said Paul, "according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all . . ." Thus was the precious salt preserved.

Paganism in the Church

But from another side also the Church was menaced by the blandishments of the world; it was menaced not only by a false Judaism, which really meant opposition of man's self-righteousness to the mysterious grace of God, but also by the all-embracing paganism of that day. When the Pauline churches were planted in the cities of the Graeco-Roman world, the battle was not ended but only begun. Would the little spark of new life be kept alive? Certainly it might have seemed to be unlikely in the extreme. The converts were for the most part not men of independent position, but slaves and humble tradesmen; they were bound by a thousand ties to the paganism of their day. How could they possibly avoid being drawn away by the current of the time? The danger certainly was great; and when Paul left an infant church like that at Thessalonica, his heart was full of dread.

But God was faithful to His promise, and the first word that came from that infant church was good. The wonder had actually been accomplished; the converts were standing firm; they were in the world but not of the world; their distinctness was kept. In the midst of pagan impurity they were living true Christian lives. But why were they living true Christian lives? That is the really important question. And the answer is plain. They were living Christian lives because they were devoted to Christian truth. "Ye turned to God," says Paul, "from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

That was the secret of their Christian lives; their Christian lives were founded upon Christian doctrine—upon theism (“the living and true God”), upon Christology (“his Son . . . whom he raised from the dead”), and upon soteriology (“which delivered us from the wrath to come”).

They kept the message intact, and hence they lived the life. So it will always be. Lives apparently and superficially Christian can perhaps sometimes be lived by force of habit, without being based upon Christian truth; but that will never do when Christian living, as in pagan Thessalonica, goes against the grain. But in the case of the Thessalonian converts the message was kept intact, and with it the Christian life. Thus again was the precious salt preserved.

The same conflict is observed in more detail in the case of Corinth. What a city Corinth was to be sure, and how unlikely a place for a Christian church! The address of Paul’s Epistle is, as Bengel says, a mighty paradox. “To the Church of God which is at Corinth”—that was a paradox indeed. And in the First Epistle to the Corinthians we have attested in all its fullness the attempt of paganism, not to combat the Church by a frontal attack, but to conquer it by the far deadlier method in merging it gradually and peacefully with the life of the world. Those Corinthian Christians were connected by many ties with the pagan life of their great city. What should they do about clubs and societies; what should they do about invitations to dinners where meat that had been offered to idols was set before the guests? What should they do about marriage and the like? These were practical questions, but they involved the great principle of the distinctness and exclusiveness of the Church. Certainly the danger was very great; the converts were in great danger, from the human point of view, of sinking back into the corrupt life of the world.

A Conflict in the Sphere of Thought

But the conflict was not merely in the sphere of conduct. More fundamentally it was in the sphere of thought. Paganism in Corinth was far too astute to think that Christian life could be attacked when Christian doctrine remained. And so pagan practice was promoted by an appeal to pagan theory; the enemy engaged in an attempt to sublimate or explain away the fundamental things of the Christian faith. Somewhat after the

manner of the Auburn “Affirmationists” in our day, paganism in the Corinthian Church sought to substitute the Greek notion of the immortality of the soul for the Christian doctrine of the resurrection. But God had His witness; the apostle Paul was not deceived; and in a great passage—the most important words, historically, perhaps, that have ever been penned—he reviewed the sheer factual basis of the Christian faith. “How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” There is the foundation of the Christian edifice. Paganism was gnawing away—not yet directly, but by ultimate implication—at that foundation in Corinth, as it has been doing so in one way or another ever since, and particularly in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America just at the present time. But Paul was there, and many of the five hundred witnesses were still alive. The gospel message was kept distinct, in the Pauline churches, from the wisdom of the world; the precious salt was still preserved.

Then, in the second century, there came another deadly conflict. It was again a conflict not with an enemy without, but with an enemy within. The Gnostics used the name of Christ; they tried to dominate the Church; they appealed to the Epistles of Paul. But despite their use of Christian language they were pagan through and through. Modern scholarship, on this point, has tended to confirm the judgment of the great orthodox writers of that day; Gnosticism was at bottom no mere variety of Christian belief, no mere heresy, but paganism masquerading in Christian dress. Many were deceived; the danger was very great. But it was not God’s will that the Church should perish. Irenaeus was there, and Tertullian with his vehement defence. The Church was saved—not by those who cried “Peace, peace, when there is no peace,” but by zealous contenders for the faith. Again, out of a great danger, the precious salt was preserved.

Time would fail us to speak of Athanasius and of Augustine and the rest, but they too were God’s instruments in the preservation of the precious salt. Certainly the attack in those days was subtle enough almost to deceive the very elect. Grant the Semi-Arians their one letter in *homoiousios*, the smallest letter of the Greek alphabet, and Christ would have been degraded to the level of a creature, mythology would have been substituted for the living God, and the victory of paganism would have been complete. From the human point of view the life of the Church was

hanging by a hair. But God was watching over His own; Athanasius stood against the world; and the precious salt was preserved.

Not Without Witnesses

Then came the Middle Ages. How long, and how dark, in some respects, was the time! It is hard to realize that eleven centuries elapsed between Augustine and Luther, yet such was the case. Never in the interval, indeed, was God altogether without His witnesses; the light still shone from the sacred page; but how dim, in that atmosphere, the light seemed to be! The gospel might have seemed to be buried forever. Yet in God's good time it came forth again with new power—the same gospel that Augustine and Paul had proclaimed. What stronger proof could there be that that gospel had come from God? Where in the history of religion is there any parallel for such a revival, after such an interval, and with such a purity of faithfulness to what had formerly been believed? A gospel that survived the Middle Ages will probably, it may well be hoped, never perish from the earth, but will be the word of life unto the end of the world.

Yet in those early years of the sixteenth century how dark was the time! When Luther made his visit to Rome, what did he find—what did he find there in the centre of the Christian world? He found paganism blatant and triumphant and unashamed; he found the glories of ancient Greece come to life in the Italian renaissance, but with those glories the self-sufficiency and the rebellion against God and the moral degradation of the natural man. Apparently the Church had at last become quite indistinguishable from the world.

But in the midst of the general wreck one thing at least was preserved. Many things were lost, but one thing was still left—the medieval Church had never lost the Word of God. The Bible had indeed become a book with seven seals; it had been buried under a mass of misinterpretation never equalled perhaps until the absurdities indulged in by the Modernism of the present day—a mass of misinterpretation which seemed to hide it from the eyes of men. But at last an Augustinian monk penetrated beneath the mass of error, read the Scriptures with his own eyes; and the Reformation was born. Thus again was the precious salt preserved.

Then came Calvin and the great consistent system which he founded upon the Word of God. How glorious were even the by-products of that system of revealed truth; a great stream of liberty spread from Geneva throughout Europe and to America across the sea. But if the by-products were glorious, more glorious by far was the truth itself, and the life that it caused men to live. How sweet and beautiful a thing was the life of the Protestant Christian home, where the Bible was the sole guide and stay! Have we really devised a substitute for that life in these latter days? I think not, my friends. There was liberty there, and love, and peace with God. But the Church after the Reformation was not to have any permanent rest, as indeed it is probably not to have rest at any time in this evil world. Still the conflict of the ages went on, and paganism prepared for an assault greater and more insidious perhaps than any that had gone before. At first there was a frontal attack—Voltaire and Rousseau and the Goddess Reason and the terrors of the French Revolution and all that. As will always be the case, such an attack was found to fail. But the enemy has now changed his method and the attack is coming, not from without but, in far more dangerous fashion, from within. During the past one hundred years the Protestant Churches of the world have gradually been becoming permeated by paganism in its most insidious form.

Sometimes paganism is blatant, as, for example, in a recent sermon in the First Presbyterian Church of New York, the burden of which was, “I Believe in Man.” That was the very quintessence of the pagan spirit—confidence in human resources substituted for the Christian consciousness of sin. But what was there blatant is found in subtler forms in many places throughout the Church. The Bible, with a complete abandonment of all scientific historical method, and of all common sense, is made to say the exact opposite of what it means; no Gnostic, no medieval monk with his four-fold sense of Scripture, ever produced more absurd Biblical interpretation than can be heard every Sunday in the pulpits of New York. Even prayer in many quarters is made a thinly disguised means of propaganda against the truth of the gospel; men pray that there may be peace, where peace means victory for the enemies of Christ. Thus gradually the Church is being permeated by the spirit of the world; it is becoming what the Auburn Affirmationists call an “inclusive” Church; it is becoming salt that has lost its savour and is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.

Face the Facts

At such a time, what should be done by those who love Christ? I think, my friends, that they should at least face the facts; I do not believe that they should bury their heads like ostriches in the sand; I do not think that they should soothe themselves with the minutes of the General Assembly or the reports of the Boards or the imposing rows of figures which the Church papers contain. Last week it was reported that the churches of America increased their membership by 690,000. Are you encouraged by these figures? I for my part am not encouraged a bit. I have indeed my own grounds for encouragement, especially those which are found in the great and precious promises of God. But these figures have no place among them. How many of these 690,000 names do you think are really written in the Lamb's book of life? A small proportion, I fear. Church membership today often means nothing more, as has well been said, than a vague admiration for the moral character of Jesus; the Church in countless communities is little more than a Rotary Club. One day, as I was walking through a neighbouring city, I saw, not an altar with an inscription to an unknown god, but something that filled me with far more sorrow than that could have done. I saw a church with a large sign on it, which read somewhat like this: "Not a member? Come in and help us make this a better community." Truly we have wandered far from the day when entrance into the Church involved confession of faith in Christ as the Saviour from sin.

Ecclesiastical Currency has been Debased

The truth is that in these days the ecclesiastical currency has been sadly debased. Church membership, church office, the ministry, no longer mean what they ought to mean. But what shall we do? I think, my friends, that, cost what it may, we ought at least to face the facts. It will be hard; it will seem impious to timid souls; many will be hurt. But in God's name let us get rid of shams and have reality at least. Let us stop soothing ourselves with columns of statistics, and face the spiritual facts; let us recall this paper currency and get back to a standard of gold.

When we do that, and when we come to God in prayer, with the real facts spread before Him, as Hezekiah spread before Him the letter of the enemy, there will be some things to cheer our hearts. God has not left

Himself altogether without His witnesses. Humble they may often be, and despised by the wisdom of the world; but they are not perhaps altogether without the favour of God. In China, in Great Britain, and in America there have been some who have raised their voices bravely for their Saviour and Lord.

True, the forces of unbelief have not yet been checked, and none can say whether our own American Presbyterian Church, which we love so dearly, will be preserved. It may be that paganism will finally control, and that Christian men and women may have to withdraw from a church that has lost its distinctness from the world. Once in the course of history, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, that method of withdrawal was God's method of preserving the precious salt. But it may be also that our Church in its corporate capacity, in its historic grandeur, may yet stand for Christ. God grant that it may be so! The future at any rate is in God's hand, and in some way or other—let us learn that much from history—the salt will be preserved.

What are you going to do, my brothers, in this great time of crisis? What a time it is to be sure! What a time of glorious opportunity! Will you stand with the world, will you shrink from controversy, will you witness for Christ only where witnessing costs nothing, will you pass through these stirring days without coming to any real decision? Or will you learn the lesson of Christian history; will you penetrate, by your study and your meditation, beneath the surface; will you recognise in that which prides itself on being modern an enemy that is as old as the hills; will you hope, and pray, not for a mere continuance of what now is, but for a rediscovery of the gospel that can make all things new; will you have recourse to the charter of Christian liberty in the Word of God? God grant that some of you may do that! God grant that some of you, even though you be not now decided, may come to say, as you go forth into the world: "It is hard in these days to be a Christian; the adversaries are strong; I am weak; but thy Word is true and thy Spirit will be with me; here am I, Lord, send me."