



Chinese International Missions, Inc.

08.01.2021

Live a Beautiful Christian Life Under the Epidemic

~Alex Ko, missionary in S. Africa

The 1997 movie from Italy, "Life is beautiful", that won an Academy Award for its leading actor tells the story of a Jewish father and son who were sent to a Nazi concentration camp. Facing a cruel and difficult environment, the father used his rich imagination to tell his five-year-old son that they were in a game. The father and son stayed positive in a joyful state of mind before their life in the concentration camp. Although the background of the film is the fact that Germany controlled, abused, and massacred Jews during World War II. But the story did not present the brutality of the German Nazis in a bloody picture, but instead showed the audience a different life in the cruelty in a comedic way.

Similarly, the apostle Paul had to face many persecutions and catastrophes during his missionary journey, but what he showed was not panic and fear. Nevertheless he was in danger, showing his longing for the future and actively fulfilling his mission. Paul said: *"I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body."* (Philippians 1:23-24) *Paul's dilemma was not because he was afraid of the helplessness of facing life and death, but because he knew the beauty of death and the importance of life, so that he lived such a beautiful Christian life with hope, mission, joy, fearlessness .*

In the past year or so, we have experienced three waves of the virus here successively, each of which has grown more severe. Of course, we do not want people around us to be infected, and we also hope that those infected can be cured. But more important than this is that we witnessed the hope of eternal life we believe in during the epidemic, and seized the opportunity to fulfill the mission of the Gospel.

During the pandemic, except for the two months when the government banned people from going out, basically, local Chinese in South Africa insisted on opening stores and going to work. So we continued to visit, to lead Bible studies, and carry on small group meetins. Because most of the pandemic gatherings are conducted online, for South Africa, where public security is not good, the risk of going out at night is, therefore, reduced. We can better arrange time to equip believers and allow more brothers and sisters to participate in evening groups and Bible studies. Among them was a sister, a single mother, who had time for gatherings only through online. After attending the gatherings, she had changed a lot. Even her non-believer friends took the initiative to ask her, feeling that she was different from before and became more joyful. She replied: Because there is the Lord Jesus. The sister even invited her friends to attend church meetings.

Although the epidemic has caused anxiety, it has also opened a gap in people's hearts. During the pandemic, the Gospel work has been more effective than usual. Gospel friends are more willing to open their hearts to share with us, and accept our help and intercession. This is an opportunity God has given us, so we must take good advantage and seize it. Thank the Lord, during the pandemic, several evangelical friends resisted from the beginning but gradually changed, and finally became believers and joined the church. Thank and praise the Lord for seeing His wonderful work in the pandemic, for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Since worship was changed to live online, even though it is convenient, brothers and sisters still hope to resume physical worship as soon as possible. At the end of last year, the pandemic eased slightly. Several brothers and sisters even rehearsed privately and wanted to dedicate hymns together when the church resumed in person. But unfortunately, the second wave of the pandemic arrived before that, and one of the brothers died of contracting the COVID. Although his family was very sad, they did not lose their confidence because of the blow, because we all know that it is very good for a believer to be able to return to the Lord. His widow was also in pain, but experiencing God's grace and comfort. The video the brothers and sisters left during their practice of the hymns will still be played on the day when we resume the physical gathering so we can worship with it.

South Africa is currently in the third wave of the pandemic. In the past month, about 20,000 people have been newly diagnosed every day. More and more people I know are infected. In early July, I and my family were also infected with the COVID. Thank the Lord we only had mild symptoms. He let us experience His love and the care of brothers and sisters. We always encourage brothers and sisters to be careful but do not worry, believe that God is faithful and loving. I believe God put us in this situation today to let every child of His come to be a glorious witness for the Lord in adversity, so that we *"will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death."*

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PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Rev Douglas Wu has just been diagnosed with the COVID 19 virus. He has chills, sore throat, headache, and pain in various parts of his body. He is now quarantined at home. Please pray for him.
2. Since June 28, South Africa has been upgraded to Level 4 of their lockdown policy. Gauteng Province, where Rev Douglas Wu and family live, was included. Please continue to pray for the COVID pandemic in South Africa, and hope that the progress of the vaccine can be carried out quickly and effectively. Pray that God will personally intervene to quell this pandemic.
3. Since end of June, Rev Wu's younger daughter, Helen, has been mobilized to rehab patients with the COVID virus. May God protect her from contracting the disease and not bringing the virus back home.
4. Pray that God will protect the brothers and sisters in South Africa to survive this third wave of COVID-19.
5. Pastor Alex Ko was diagnosed the COVID virus but thankfully he was only mildly ill. Please pray that he will be able to recover and continue lead the ministry during the isolation period.
6. During this period of time, Nicole Ko has to take care of Alex, who's in isolation, and the lives and studies of their two children. Ask the Lord to give her more strength.
7. The Belém Chinese Christian Church in Brazil is currently under the leadership of Pastor Jorge Luo. On July 1st, Pastor Luo went to São Luis to hold a farewell service for Brother Ye Wanchun. On July 10, Pastor Luo was invited to lead the St. Paul Chinese Missionary Alliance Youth Fellowship meeting. There were ten meetings on Saturday night. Please help the newly established Belém Chinese Christian Church to lead the local Chinese to believe in the Lord.
8. Pray for the bible study meetings on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday led by Pastor Luo, and pray for the presence of God.
9. Pray for the family for CIM Canada board member, Siu Lui Ho, as he passed away from cancer on June 24.
10. Pray for home assignment for CIM Canada worker in Ghana, Janice Wong. She will be in Canada until Sept 27. Pray for a time of renewal, fellowship with supporters and opportunities to share about our ministries. Pray also for the upcoming Ghana Info Session on Aug 21 which she will lead.
11. Pray for the recruiting effort underway to fill job vacancies in CIM for a Director of Ministry to oversee STM and daily operations, and an Executive Director successor.
12. Pray that God will move more brothers and sisters to join the ministry so God's kingdom would be more prosperous. Pray for God's abundant provision for all the financial needs of CIM.

NOTE

Beginning March 1, please call 408-596-4567 to contact CIM for questions or comments. Thank you for your continual support.

FINANCIAL REPORT

June 2021

	Income	Expense	Balance
General	\$4,280	\$1,062	\$3,218
Missions	\$5,960	\$9,360	-\$3,400
Total	\$10,240	\$10,422	-\$182

To contribute to CIM ministries:

- 1) Make checks payable to "CIM" and mail to: P.O. Box 700185, San Jose, CA 95170-0185, USA
- 2) Donate online via credit card, go to: www.cimusa.org
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