



Chinese International Missions, Inc.

04.01.2024

「Our House Will Serve the Lord」

~Pastor Alex Ko

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15b). This is Joshua's declaration before the Israelites. It is also a very encouraging verse for us, that we can firmly follow the Lord as a family and serve God, which is indeed a great blessing. In serving, family members sometimes bring us support, and sometimes they bring resistance. But these resistances are often also opportunities for us to experience God's additional grace.

I remember that when we, as a couple, decided to respond to the Lord's call to serve Him full-time, we were about to enter the seminary to receive equipping when we were opposed by Nicole's parents, who had yet to believe in the Lord at the time. What's more, her mother considered us devoting too much in the Lord and getting lost. Not working hard to earn money is irresponsible to the family and children. Nicole's mother was so angry that she didn't answer our calls for several weeks. But what we didn't expect was that during the four years we were studying in seminary in Taiwan, God led both of Nicole's parents to believe in Him. When they had the opportunity to visit us in Taiwan, they were baptized in our internship church and the seminary respectively.

After we graduated, we joined CIM as missionaries. In the second year after we returned to South Africa to serve, Nicole's father went for a physical examination because he felt unwell. After several different doctors' diagnoses, they all came up with the same result and concluded that he had bone cancer. Nicole's mother didn't tell us because she was afraid that we would worry, and she did not want to increase the pressure on our serving. She just knelt down and prayed to God with tears, asking the Lord to heal the father's disease. And just before he was about to undergo treatment, he underwent a final check-up, and the result turned out not to be bone cancer but, rather, bone tuberculosis, which could be cured. After Nicole's mother learned of the result, she reported the good news to us, telling us how she felt at the time and how God had listened to her prayers. As we listened, we were first grateful that Nicole's father had been healed by God. And second, we were even more grateful to God for the change in Nicole's mother. She used to be against us serving, but she became our watchman and share our burden. Sometimes I wondered if we had not responded to God's call to serve Him because of Nicole's parents' opposition at that time, it is difficult to say whether they would eventually change and believe in the Lord.

I remember Elder Song Xianhui, a teacher at our seminary, once shared with us that he was called to serve full-time when he was young. His pastor at the time, Elder Wu Yong, gave him some special reminders. One of them was: "You care about God's family. God will care about your home." This sentence reminds us deeply, especially during serving, when some situations arise at home, apart from praying, we can really only leave it to the Lord who cares about us.

Especially during the years of the epidemic, we could help our brothers and sisters and evangelical friends in South Africa by taking them for COVID testing; if they were diagnosed, we would help them go to the hospital and take care of them. However, when Nicole's mother was diagnosed with COVID in China, we couldn't be around to take care of her because we were restricted from returning to China at that time. We could only use video calls to care for her and ask brothers and sisters to pray together. Thank you, God, for caring about our family, healing Nicole's mother again, and showing mercy to us.

As our parents get older and Nicole and I are both the only child in our families, our parents' health and care are often our concerns. Thank you, Lord, for always protecting their health. Although they have some long-term illnesses, their conditions are finally stabilized, and they don't have many problems. In October last year, we added a new Evergreen Fellowship at our church. Among them are elders in their 60s and 70s, about the same age as our parents. Every time we gather with them, it feels like we are taking care of our own parents, because we know that when we take care of the people in God's family, God also take care of our family members far away. And we believe that the loving Lord will definitely give us the opportunity to be filial to our parents.

This year, God was particularly gracious to me and gave me a free round-trip air ticket to Hong Kong, so that I could take my daughter to visit my parents there. Since I

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returned to South Africa to serve, I have not had the opportunity to visit them in the past seven years. This time I was very happy to see that everything was well with my parents. My father even said to me: Don't worry, God will take care of the church, and He will quietly support us. We just need to serve with our best.

Every family has things that are yet to be solved, and there are even things that cannot be solved, including parents' affairs, husband's affairs, and children's affairs. When Joshua declared: *"As for me and my family, we will serve the Lord."* I believe that there were still unresolved problems in Joshua's family at that time, but he still chose to follow and serve God first.

May the Lord protect our family, and may we firmly follow and serve the Lord throughout our lives.

PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Nicole Ko continued to follow up on the seekers and invited them to attend catechesis courses. Please ask the Lord to use her to lead the seekers to believe in the Lord.
2. Easter Sunday is a Gospel Sunday at PECCC Church. Please pray that the Lord will uphold the message and service on that day and lead Gospel friends to participate.
3. Please pray for Pastor Alex Ko and their plans for this year's gospel ministry and church pastoral care and ask the Lord to use them to spread the gospel and equip disciples.
4. A total of ten people are in the baptism class at the Belo Horizonte church in Brazil.
5. Please pray for Rev Lin's health. He had undergone prostate surgery and is currently following up.
6. Pray for CIM's STM team that will come to Brazil in July.
7. Please continue to pray for peace in Ukraine. The invasion rages on and innocent lives are lost each day. Pray for House of Mercy as they take care of refugees, physically and spiritually. As we are in the middle of winter, many of the villages have been cut off from electricity and running water.
8. Pray for the finances of CIM Canada ministries. Pray for new donors and a healthy general fund to run their ministries. In order to do that effectively, they are currently seeking monthly donors.
9. Please continue to 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. If you know of anyone who is interested and qualifies, please contact us.
10. 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

Please call 408-596-4567 to contact CIM for questions or comments. Thank you for your continual support.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Feb 2024

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>Balance</u>
General	\$5,221	\$2,563	\$2,658
Missions	\$6,922	\$6,616	\$306
Total	<u>\$12,143</u>	<u>\$9,179</u>	<u>\$2,964</u>

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 Click on "Give" and follow directions. Thank you!



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