

THE SPIRITUAL LEGACY OF NORTH POINT ALLIANCE CHURCH

---by Rev. Gordon Siu

INTRODUCTION:

North Point Alliance Church has been established in Hong Kong for more than 50 years. Throughout the years, God has used various pastors, believers, messages and visions amidst good or bad situations to encourage the NPAC family to pursue specially treasured Biblical values and virtues, which have become our “spiritual legacies” from one generation to another. We dare not boast of these, nor take them as an excuse for stubbornness. We only believe that these legacies are “treasures” given to NPAC by God as inheritance from Him. Though we may be reminiscent of these past beautiful testimonies, let us encourage each other: “Do not miss the grace and blessings we have received from Him; instead, strive for deeper spiritual growth, looking to Him to receive even more grace and blessings”!

As a part of the body of NPAC, we have the responsibility to know these “spiritual legacies” given to us by the LORD, and also to humble ourselves before Him, asking HIM to enable this generation of believers to become a channel of blessings to those around us, obeying God’s will for NPAC, and passing on the Gospel of Grace to the generations to come.

1. **GOD GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE**

NPAC family has received much grace and blessing from the Lord—continual growth of the church in many areas – evangelistic ministries, offerings for missions, and church planting have been affirmed and recognized by other churches as success.

While we give thanks to God for all these works during these years, we are also reminded by the Holy Spirit of His Word:

- “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.” (Luke 12:48 b)
- “For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?” (I Corinthians 4:7)
- “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (I Peter 5:5b)

These Bible verses often warn us: “DO NOT BOAST!”

Many pastors, ministers and lay-leaders of NPAC family also leave us examples of humble services:

Pastor Philip Teng respected everyone, and highly regarded others’ strength;

Pastor Yen Wu, Minister Kim Ching Lai worked very diligently, never considered their own loss or gain; deacons and lay-leaders served whole-heartedly in their roles without complaints and without lifting up their own names.

In the history of church expansion of NPAC family, it could often be seen clearly that it was not done by man's own endeavor and effort; it was accomplished by God's gracious hands.

We desire God's blessing because His blessing is more precious than any accomplishments by men. We do not seek 'success', and we are not willing to let any 'growth' or 'development' diminish our desire to seek God Himself - our goal is GOD Himself. Therefore, we must be careful in obeying His will for the church as a whole and also for ourselves in order that we may complete what He has purposed for us to do.

2. WORK TOGETHER IN HARMONY, RESPECTING EACH OTHER

One of the testimonies of God's blessing to NPAC family is that church leaders work in harmony together. Of course no one is perfect, but most ministry leaders can testify to God's faithfulness in keeping us in good relationships.

In the NPAC family history, God helped the pastors and the congregation establish trustworthy relationships: believers respect pastors, pastors respect believers, loving each other. The church as a whole respects the leadership of the pastoral team in spiritual matters and church developments, complementing each other in their ministries.

In various pastoral staff and deacons meetings, we emphasize unity, boldness and at the same time careful speech, appropriately expressing our feelings. When there are apparent disagreements, we avoid coming to a haste decision

but will wait for an opportune time to discuss further while seeking God's will in the meantime.

3. IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE

This motto is printed in big letters in Chinese characters and is put above the main church reception area. This is the NPAC family motto for many years. In 1961 while NPAC family had much deficit in its financial position, the church still decided to support missionary Ms Kam-Sin Kwok to serve in Vietnam. This began our first step of offering in faith. Ever since that time, God has blessed the church with abundance so that we could use $\frac{3}{4}$ of our income from offerings for local and overseas missions work. Until 1992 when the church moved to its present location (Fortress Tower), there had been an increase in the number of pastoral staff and also ministries. Thus a substantial increase of expenses led to reduction of missions supports to only one-half of our income.

However, God has continued to bless us in other ways.

NPAC family learned also not to only look to our own interests within, but also to the interests of other Gospel & training needs without. In 1977, the church sent Rev. & Mrs. Philip Teng to Kalimantan, Indonesia as missionaries for 1 year. At that time the church did not suffer because of this. On the contrary, there was the highest number of people baptized that year (this number was not exceeded until 10 years later). In August 2001 the church sent Senior Pastor Gordon Siu to be acting Principal for the Alliance Seminary for 2 years in order to support the work in Seminary education (full-time for 5 months, part-time for the rest). God

promised blessings to those who give—in 2002 the church experienced tremendous growth. The increase in worship participants was doubled when compared with the year before; the number of people baptized in December was almost doubled too, and at the same time 2 daughter churches were being planted.

4. GOD IS THE CENTRE OF EVERYTHING

Throughout all these years, NPAC family emphasized an important direction of spiritual pursuit – that we must glorify God in every ministry, focusing on magnifying the LORD. In love we respond to people’s needs, but still we must follow God’s directions, aiming at obeying and pleasing God.

The worship services at NPAC family emphasize “GOD-Centered” worship. Worship services are not to fulfill personal feelings or emotional needs. Worship is an offering to our GOD, Who is worthy of all praises and honor. When God is being glorified, man will naturally receive God’s promised blessings. Therefore, NPAC family worship requires our congregation to come with reverent hearts and tidy proper attire. With the exception of new-comers, latecomers are not seated 10 minutes after the worship service has begun. During the worship service everyone offers hymns, prayers, teachable hearts, and money as sacrifices, and everyone rejoices as God’s blessing touches the heart.

If the church’s development is based on human efforts and not God’s works, there will be no spiritual fruits, neither will there be glory to God. Therefore NPAC family practices the following:

- “If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.” (I Peter 4:11)

Therefore NPAC family also dares not go without PRAYERS:

- All church staff and ministers pray together in unity weekly;
- Everyday each person disciplines him/herself to pray;
- Simultaneous prayer meetings for specific worship services and evangelistic meetings are being held;
- The church stresses the importance of prayer meetings on Thursdays and Saturdays for the entire church;
- Prayer partners in small groups to “watch and pray” are formed and encouraged;
- a morning prayer week is held 2 to 3 times a year.

Together let us admit that we need to acknowledge HIM as our Almighty GOD!

5. TEACHING THE TRUTH IS OUR BASIS

Christian education through Sunday School has played an important role over the years in the growth of NPAC family. Countless number of brothers and sisters has been nurtured with God’s Word. New believers must be rooted in firm biblical truths by attending Nurturing courses & Baptismal classes before they are baptized to become members of the NPAC family.

The sermons given at worship services have a specific theme for each quarter, alternating between preaching on Bible books and topical current issues.

However, all sermons contents are based on Scriptural passages (Biblical expositions). We believe what the author of the Book of Acts writes in the following:

- “Now I commit you to God and to *the word of His grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*”
(Acts 20:32)

We also affirm that practicing the truth is the way of demonstrating our belief in the truth. NPAC family has also made known to the public our stand on personal and social moral issues. For more than 10 years, by the grace of God, we maintain NPAC’s “Manual for Church Discipline”, carrying out the necessary steps to restore those who have sinned. God has also been merciful to us — He has renewed and rebuilt some fallen members and leaders in our family.

6. OFFERING BY FAITH

During the yearly Mission Conference, members of NPAC family are encouraged to learn offering by faith-pledge, admitting that we lack but pledging according to the moving of our hearts. We make our requests to God for increasing faith, so that we know what the Apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians.

- “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”
(2Corinthians 9:8)

Therefore, when we pledge by faith, we are going to experience God's amazing provision even before money or God's power are given to us.

In the history of NPAC family, pledging by faith has not been limited to Missions offerings. We experienced "do-it-by-faith" during the church planting at different times — our experience was that we saw the needs of the Gospel in different places and courageously assumed responsibility to plant the churches even when we were lacking resources (Wah Kei Church, Yuen Long Church, Yuen Kei Church are examples),

We also experienced the same do-it-by-faith from the church expansion projects — facing tremendous financial needs, yet brothers and sisters pledged by faith.

This faith is one of the important elements of the driving force in church growth.

Ever since NPAC family moved into the present premises in 1992, ministry needs have continued to grow and leaders often felt overwhelmed. However, when we have stood by our principle of pledging by faith, God has allowed NPAC family to expand in many new areas of ministries. For example, we started the Family Service Centre, established PuTongHua and English ministries, set up Saturday worship service, Word & Heart fellowships, etc.

- "Then Jesus said, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?'" (John 11:40)

7. LOVE OUR CHURCH

NPAC family is called "FAMILY" because we believe that besides our biological family everyone needs a spiritual home, a family where we can grow spiritually,

where we are protected, comforted, and mutually supported. Throughout the history of NPAC family development, there are many testimonies of love by pastors and members of the church. During the early days of the church there were financial difficulties, and our Pastor, instead of receiving a salary from the church, continued his pastor's work at no salary and at the same time worked late into the night for a long time to translate books to earn money in order to provide for the church's needs. During church expansion, there were brothers and sisters who worked day and night, doing their best to serve. In order to give to the church for the expansion some gave up the money they intended for their holiday and some mortgaged their homes. Throughout the years, there are a large number of believers who give their time and money (sometimes without knowledge of the church they paid for other expenses of the church) to serve the LORD because they love HIM and the Church.

Although the Church has grown in quantity through the years, only 30% of the congregation holds ministry positions. There are many who serve inconspicuously. Many are serving in a pragmatic way, not for name or fame, encouraged only by the love of our LORD Jesus Christ.

We know clearly:

- "...Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:25b)

What are we?