

# GO

PARADOX  
OF POWER *04*

“IT’S THE END  
OF THE WORLD  
AS WE KNOW IT,  
AND I FEEL  
FINE. *08*

NOVEMBER ON  
THE KARAKORAM  
HIGHWAY *12*

WHAT IS  
**ENOUGH**





12



04



12



20



08

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# from the Editor

An idea can be an elusive thing to capture. We spent a lot of time chasing this year's GO theme before we could pin it down. It began with the question of our motivation: What is our motivation for missions? Gradually, a duality emerged, two sides of the same coin, one word or one idea that could express more than one thought ("One thing God has spoken, two things I have heard," says Psalm 62:11), and it coalesced around the word "enough." One word: enough; two contrasting ideas: sufficiency and complacency.

The best motivation is to go when we are satisfied in God's love for us. Once we understand that, we don't have to worry that we don't have enough or that we aren't good enough. We don't need to run from our fears or avoid our weaknesses. Just the opposite. We embrace them because, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" 2 Corinthians 12:9.

In this issue of GO, Alistair Chiu, Pastor of Equipping, unpacks the paradox of the above passage and bridges the distance between the lives and actions of Bible "heroes" and us.

Hannah Lau, an author, consultant and former tent-maker, tackles the specific excuses and rationales for why we don't go, and brings the gospel to challenge those reasons head on. In doing so, she redeems the lyrics of a rock anthem of the 90's.

Jon Lau and Sherman Chau went to Pakistan to visit a mainland Chinese couple who are serving as missionaries there. The terrain was a fitting metaphor for the challenges of ministry and we tried to capture a slice of their life in pictures and words.

Many people at Island ECC have found their sufficiency in Christ. We profile a few of them who have been involved in our outreach trips. These are stories from "the pews," from real people like you, the reader, and perhaps in these pictures and words, you will see something of yourself.

But after all this, we still felt that "enough" was still ... well, not quite enough. We needed a command, a word that had direction and energy and force. Fortunately we did not need to look any further than the Great Commission.

We have enough. Christ's sufficiency is enough to overcome our complacency... So go. Go past your comfort zone. Go out in faith. Go to the place where God calls you. Go Beyond.



A detailed engraving of a man wrestling a lion, a classic biblical scene. The man, with curly hair and wearing a yellow tunic, is wrestling the lion on the ground. The lion is on its back, with its front paws raised. In the background, there are mountains and a large yellow triangle that covers the upper left portion of the image. The style is that of a 19th-century engraving.

FEATURE

# THE PARADOX OF POWER

WRITER *Alistair Chiu*

*It almost sounds like a riddle: too much of it and you become headstrong  
and overconfident, not enough and you couldn't even hurt a mouse.  
Where is the sweet spot of Power?*

Have you ever looked at the stories of people in the Bible and marvelled at God's power at work in their lives? Hebrews 11 is a whole chapter that talks about the heroes of faith and the deeds that they accomplished. People like Abraham, Moses, Jephthah, David, Ezekiel, Daniel and more. As the chapter says, these Old Testament heroes performed miracles, saw visions of God, conquered armies, led the people, prophesied God's messages, served foreign kings and talked with angels. And in the New Testament we see people filled with the Spirit of God witnessing about Jesus fearlessly

to the authorities, performing even more miracles, and even dying bravely for Christ. How is it that they get the power to do such things? You might be thinking, I am not powerful like they were, so I cannot do great things for God.

But the apostle Paul, through whom God worked some of the most powerful miracles in the New Testament, knew a secret about the way that God worked. And that secret is: God's power comes not in human might, wisdom or ingenuity, but in human weakness. Paul tells a story where, after receiving great revelations

from God, he also received a painful thorn, a 'messenger from Satan'. After praying fervently for God to take it away, God gently refused, saying, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Paradoxically, Paul had to experience weakness along with power from God. He had to learn to rely on God's grace, His power through his weaknesses. This is what happened with the heroes of the Old Testament as well. They too had weaknesses that caused them to rely on God. And through them and their weaknesses God accomplished many great things.



# God does not always work in the way that we expect or even want Him to.

**We can learn a few things from the way that Paul dealt with his weakness. Firstly, when trouble came his way, Paul prayed fervently to God.** Paul knew that his trouble, which was hindering him in some way, came from Satan. And Paul would not just lie down and accept his fate, he interceded with God. Just as we are told to resist the devil by prayer, Paul resisted this thorn by praying to God. Three times he prayed – not just three quick prayers, but three times of prayer – just as Jesus also prayed three times at the Garden of Gethsemane. Paul pleaded with God – not just an afterthought of casual prayer, but in tears, wrestling, and pleading with God. The removal of this thorn obviously meant a great deal to Paul, and he agonised with God over it. Paul persisted in prayer because he knew that God was in control and sovereign over this thorn. And God was in control. Although the thorn was to remain, it was for Paul’s sake. Paul eventually realized that it was given to stop him from exalting himself. It was to remain a source of weakness for him, so that God’s power could also rest on him.

**Secondly, we should note that when God did not remove the thorn, Paul experienced a renewal of God’s comforting presence in the midst of his distress.**

He discovered God’s grace afresh, empowering him to persevere through the thorn. He experienced in a new way ‘the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles’. Paul’s relief came not in the removal of the thorn but in his abiding, secure relation with God. He learned to trust and rely in God’s provision and had his faith strengthened through this experience. Reflecting on this experience, Paul went on to boast about his weaknesses. He did not boast about his own triumphs, his successes, or his own power. He boasted instead in God’s power, even if it comes through his weaknesses. ‘That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.’

God does not always work in the way that we expect or even want Him to. We don’t see the full picture of what God sees, but like Paul, we can be confident that God loves us, hears us and is working for our good, even through difficult circumstances. He could be allowing us to go through a painful situation so that we can experience His grace and love in a greater way. God can meet us in the weakness of ill health or financial difficulty, when events are spiralling out of control, in the inadequacy we feel when confronted with a challenge or opposition beyond our experience, in our helplessness when faced with persecution, disaster or tragedy, or in the despair we feel when faced with constant temptation. Paul faced all of these in his lifetime, and God’s grace met him on each occasion.

Our world is obsessed with power – gaining power, holding onto power, and wielding power. God’s way is different to all that. One commentator puts it like this: ‘...human power, in its striving at good and well-being, always seeks to increase itself in the domination of other human beings. God’s power moves in precisely the opposite direction: the One who dwells “in a high and holy place” dwells with the lowly (Isaiah 57:15)... The goal of God’s power is not to increase itself (which could not be done) but to lower itself so that it is present and dwells within human weakness and need. This is precisely what has taken place in the resurrection of Christ, the Crucified One.’

Therefore, we come to understand and experience God’s power exactly when we go through times of weakness, and when we realise that God is still there for us and will get us through. This is what Jesus experienced, and it’s the path that He calls us to walk. This is the way of the gospel, the way of the cross. God is not impressed by worldly displays of strength or grandeur, and He will not give up His glory to others. ‘God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong....so that no one can boast before Him.’ Instead, God delights in empowering His people who trust in Him. He will not let us go. When we are weak, we are strong, for God’s grace is sufficient for us. ■

<sup>1</sup> 2 Corinthians 12:9  
<sup>2</sup> 2 Corinthians 1:3-4  
<sup>3</sup> 2 Corinthians 12:10  
<sup>4</sup> Mark A. Seifrid, *The Second Letter to the Corinthians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 450.  
<sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:27,29

## The Road Goes Ever On

The apostle Paul was a great (perhaps the greatest) missionary of the New Testament and his four journeys are epic stories of bold faith and adventure. He was “a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kinds and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15). Specifically, the charge to bring the gospel to the Gentiles would challenge Paul to go far beyond his comfort zone and require his utmost dependence on God’s strength.

01

### Go beyond geography

Paul traveled throughout the Roman world by land and sea to preach and plant churches. One scholar estimates that his four journeys totaled 25,000 km (Hong Kong to London is 9,641 kilometres). He also ministered right in his own city of Jerusalem. No distance was too far for the sake of the gospel.

*Are you reluctant to travel to foreign countries? Does the thought of long-haul travel and hard conditions put you off? A deep understanding of His grace and mercy are all the motivation you need to go anywhere He calls you.*

02

### Go beyond culture

Gentiles ate many things that were forbidden to Jews, but Paul understood his freedom in Christ and did not let his prejudices about food and other cultural practices become an obstacle to cross-cultural relationships. “I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.” (1 Corinthians 9:22)

*Do you have a prejudice about another culture? Do you have stereotypes or judgments about another group of people? Remember that God always intended the Good News to go beyond one people group to all tribes and tongues and nations.*

03

### Go beyond reason

Paul was highly educated and could hold his own with philosophers in Athens, the ultimate marketplace of ideas. But he also knew that the gospel always trumped intellect: “God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise.” (1 Corinthians 1:27)

*Do you sometimes rationalize your way out of God’s will? Do you ever feel inadequate to do what He calls you to do? Remember that He doesn’t call the equipped; He equips those He calls.*

Although Paul’s exploits may seem to be beyond our reach, we are reminded that anyone can tap into that same source of power: Christ’s strength given expression through our weakness. And by that logic, we can do similar things for the glory of God.



# “It’s the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine.”

WRITER *Hannah Lau*



L

yrics from 80’s pop songs don’t often capture the state of the world, but in this case, R.E.M. sums it up well.

“It’s the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine.” – R.E.M.

The world is indeed ending. We don’t have to look far to see that things are not going very well. But yet, despite all that’s happening, somehow, we find it possible to still ‘feel fine’. We’re able to read the news, shake our heads, maybe say a quick prayer, and then move on with the rest of our day, running in the ever-speedy rat race that is life in Hong Kong.

So how can we spur ourselves on to do more? How do you care for all the pain that is going on in the world?

How can world events and crises challenge our complacency?

Answer: They don’t.

## Shifting the Question

World events and crises will never be able to challenge our complacency because they are not agents of change. At best, world events and crises bring about change through fear, panic, confusion, frustration, and maybe even guilt – change like this doesn’t last. Not only is it negative and superficial, it also doesn’t incite conviction. Moving from our complacency would require something that has transformative power.

To make matters worse, we as human beings are stuck. We’re complacent, weak, fearful, and a whole bunch of other things that make us wish we were better. This is how we are and contrary to what we’d like to think, we are hopeless at changing ourselves. We don’t stand a chance at changing our spots unless something external, something bigger than us, intervenes.

Thank God we have the Gospel.

The Gospel is not just our ‘mode of salvation’. What Jesus Christ overcame on the cross changes the world. It is the only thing that can truly transform, motivate, convict, and address an individual’s soul. The Gospel changes the game, and brings redemption to everything great and small.

The Gospel is the ultimate demonstration of God’s sufficiency for us.

To deal with our complacency towards the world, we need to be sure we’re asking the right question to begin with.

“How can the GOSPEL challenge our complacency?”

## A Gospel That Transforms

The Gospel challenges us by changing us.

1

*It changes the way we see people, turning pity into compassion.*

Without the Gospel, we offer “those poor people” our charity, our sympathy, but often with a downward looking attitude. We who are fortunate are here to help those who are not. Jesus offered compassion. He got down to the same level as those who were hurting and walked in pain with them.

2

*It changes us to see our life on earth in the context of eternity.*

Without the Gospel, this life is all we have, so do all you can to serve yourself and enjoy. Jesus offers eternal life. There’s more to life than these 80 some-odd years. What we choose to do here can impact eternity.

3

*It changes the way we view our resources, we are blessed to bless.*

Without the Gospel, all that we have on this earth is all there is, therefore we must hoard and store up for ourselves. Jesus offers His heavenly Kingdom. Possessions on earth simply pale in comparison but are an honour to steward on the Lord’s behalf.

As Christians, our mission, should we choose to accept it, is to take up our cross and follow Christ, partnering with God in His plan to redeem the world.

When we allow ourselves to be transformed by the Gospel, we'll see ourselves in a new light and subsequently the needs of the world in that same light. What was previously 'not my business' is now something you feel compelled and burdened to be a part of. "[Your heart will] be broken by the things that break the heart of God." (Bob Pierce, Founder of World Vision and Samaritan's Purse)

But the needs of the world are only the opportunity. The call, first and foremost, is to take our place before God, committing to living a life that glorifies Him and blesses people. From there, the Spirit of God will naturally lead you to opportunities that help the hurting world.

Getting Our Humanity Out of the Way

Despite being convinced of the above, sometimes our human nature still gets the better of us. We've become quite skilled at making 'holy' excuses, procrastinating, or figuring 'someone else will do it'. Any of these sound familiar?

1 The 'all or nothing'

Just because God doesn't ask you to go to Africa and live in a hut doesn't mean you don't have a part to play in missions. It's understandable, we live in a society of extremes. Hong Kong is not just fast, it's very fast. It's not just efficient, it's very efficient. Space is not just limited, it's very limited. We don't just go for dim sum, it's got to be the best dim sum (without crossing the harbour, of course). Excellence is not wrong but when we apply these extremes to our walk with Christ, we absolve ourselves from the call to serve God right where we are. God has given each of us a sphere of influence, people He has intended us to reach. Living for Christ begins in this sphere, and then goes beyond to the nations.

2 The 'I'm not the type'

Not 'the type'? That's great, because God isn't looking for people who are. None of the people God used in the Bible were 'the type' either. But God has not left us with nothing. To start, He has given us Himself, the ultimate sufficiency. On top of that, He has given each of us gifts, passions, and resources. We've got everything we need to serve Him.

3 The 'still praying about it'

Seeking, praying, and waiting on the Lord is good. But sometimes we stay stuck at the praying stage waiting for the loading bar of 'signs and confirmations' to reach 100%. But it never will, because that gap is what faith is for. Once you've lifted it up to God, it's time to get up and go. As you walk, God will guide.

4 The 'too small to make a difference'

It's a good thing the God we serve isn't about the numbers. There is no hierarchy when it comes to God's work. Whether you're a banker, a dancer, a stay at home mom, or a pastor, He has designed a part for you to play and nothing is too small to matter.

Moving Forward in His Sufficiency

- 'What cause should I give to, there's too many?'
- 'I'll look into a worthy organization, where do I begin?'
- 'I want to volunteer, but where do I find time?'
- 'Can my small gift really solve the crisis in the Middle East?'

These are the types of questions that flood into our minds when we read the news. It overwhelms us, and then paralyzes us. In the end, we stand like a deer caught in the headlights, waiting for the moment to pass, before we settle into defeat, helplessness, and guilt.

That's not what God wants for us. Believe it or not, God is bigger than the world's problems. The largeness of these events should open our eyes to see God as big as He truly is in all His sovereignty. The horror of crisis should drive us to cling to His comfort. The urgency of the needs should motivate us to serve more diligently where He has led us. Because if it really is the end of the world as we know it, in light of the Gospel, we shouldn't feel fine. ■

HERE ARE SOME WAYS

YOU CAN RESPOND IN PRAYER.

YOU MAY USE THESE AS

A STARTING POINT,

AND CONTINUE TO PRAY

IN YOUR OWN WORDS



Pray that you would see the world through the lens of the Gospel  
Lord, I acknowledge that Your thoughts are not my thoughts but I want to be renewed by the transforming of my mind so that Your ways will become my ways. Show me things in Your Word and in the world that will challenge me and change me.



Pray for yourself to decrease so that He may increase  
Father, I know that I myself can be the greatest impediment to Your will: my pride, my doubts, my delaying all hinder the accomplishment of Your will for my life. Grant me the same attitude as Christ, who emptied and humbled Himself before You.



Pray for contentment that leads to obedience  
God, may I be fully content in what You've given me and totally satisfied in Christ's sufficiency. Let me be Your hands and feet in this world, and be glorified in my life.





CHRONICLE

# NOVEMBER ON THE KARAKORAM HIGHWAY

*Freezing temperatures, high speeds on narrow mountain roads and armed guards who casually pointed their AK's at us — all worth it to experience Northern Pakistan and meet friends who serve there.*

WRITER *Sherman Chau* | PHOTOS *Jon Lau*





previous page:  
*The Hunza Valley as seen from the Karakoram Highway in northern Pakistan. The Highway, which traces many paths of the ancient Silk Road, is the junction of world's three tallest mountain ranges: the Karakoram, Himalayas and Hindu Kush.*

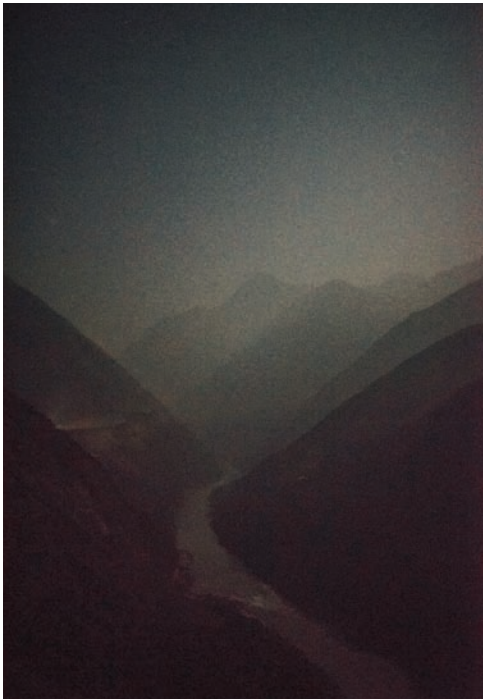
this page clockwise:  
*The headmistress and students of the school where Daniel had once taught wushu and physical education; applying the "Go Beyond" theme to photography, Jon pushed the camera past its limits, shooting at ISO 12,800; f1.4 at 1/15th of a second (hand-held from a moving van!). His faith was rewarded with this sublime picture; hospitality and warm smiles from all ages were always abundant on the journey.*

"Did I pack enough?"

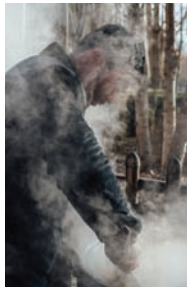
I ask myself this question in Sost, Pakistan. It is negative eight Celsius in the late afternoon. We have entered from China through the Khunjerab Pass. At 4,700 metres, it is the highest border in the world. The wind is a sub-zero scalpel, whipping down from the jagged, snow-capped peaks and penetrating all the layers I have on. Will I be prepared for what the elements might throw at me the rest of the trip?

Jonathan and I are here to find a story in words and pictures about what it means to have enough and what it means to trust that God will take us past our comforts and limits. Our guide is Alan, one of Island ECC's Supported Partners. He has been in Shanghai for more than 20 years and has helped a Chinese couple, Daniel and Mary, discern and follow God's call to missions. The five of us travel the 1300 km length of the Karakoram Highway, beginning in Kashgar, Xinjiang and ending just north of Islamabad.

As we huddle around a small heater in our hotel, Daniel shares that becoming a believer meant unlearning much of what the education system taught him about self-sufficiency and self-reliance. Since he started studying and practicing wushu at age 10, Daniel learned to trust in his own strength. In his second







year of university as a Physical Education major, his friends brought him to church where the music and sermon made him recognize that he needed more. He needed Jesus. After graduation, everyone told him that he needed a driver's license to be employable for the best jobs. So he signed up for lessons, but somehow was always at the end of long waiting lists and never made it into a course. But not taking the driving course freed him one evening to hear a sermon about having faith to be sent out, and a specific challenge to go to Pakisan. Something leapt up in his heart.

He went at first with no English and no Urdu, just obedience and a mastery of Chinese martial arts. This would be enough. When some Pakistani wushu enthusiasts discovered his background, they came to his house each day and begged him to teach

clockwise from left:  
The school where  
Daniel once taught;  
in a warm reunion,  
Daniel leads an  
impromptu and  
refresher wushu lesson  
at his former school;  
there were natural  
hot springs at this stop  
point near Sost, but  
you'd never guess from

the way I'm dressed!;  
Alan and Mashroof,  
our driver who had  
learned Putonghua  
from 5 years of driving  
Chinese engineers to  
their work sites; a chef  
is almost hidden by the  
steam from "pull rice,"  
a Tajik dish of lamb,  
carrots and raisins  
that was one of our  
favourite meals.

opposite from top:  
More vegetation and  
warmer temperatures  
as we head south  
towards Besham;  
Sajjad Masib,  
executive director of  
the Shining Light  
Academy in Gilgit  
with the school security  
guard.



them. After three days, he acquiesced. Now he plans to open a studio in Rawalpindi, northern Pakistan, to teach wushu and also to share about the deeper source of strength that he found in Christ.

His wife, Mary, had been raised in a Christian family and was already in full-time ministry in China when she met Daniel. In their first year of marriage, after joining him in Rawalpindi, she truly learned what it means to depend on the Lord. She spent hours of the day alone, confined to their home, isolated by the conservative Muslim culture around them and the lack of language. In those dark days, she learned that God was enough and that His grace was sufficient for her. There were many moments when it would have been easier to give up and go home, but she trusted that God would eventually take her outside of her small circle. Now with two more years of experience and language study, she is making friends and doing handicrafts with women in her neighbourhood, who also yearn to have more of life outside their home.

It turned out to be just one very cold night on our trip. As we resumed our journey the next day, the highway gradually descended. The white caps began to disappear and the mountainsides seemed to soften with colour and foliage as it became warmer. I did have enough after all. ■



# Serving God, here and abroad

Island ECC is involved in ongoing long-term Kingdom work in many countries through our supported partners and organisations. Many of the people described here have been raised up and sent out from Island ECC. All together, our partnership with them represents a whole expression of the Good News in many cultures and countries. Due to space (and sometimes security) we can only tell part of what they are doing in their area – come talk to the Outreach team if you'd like to learn more!

- Missionary
- Organization

M Aaron & Tabitha are teaching middle school and high school third-culture kids (TCKs) in the subjects of mathematics and science. Their role is to support Bible translators through education so that the parents can focus on what they are called to do.

○ Alpha HK serves Hong Kong by bringing Alpha International's ministry and resources to the local community, translating materials into Chinese and also producing original Cantonese content.

alpha.org/hongkong

○ Arab World Evangelical Ministers Association (AWEMA) plants churches, trains pastors and develop women leaders in the Arab countries.

awema.org

M Bill & Eva (Lee) Tsang are sharing the gospel and making disciples among foreign university students in Hong Kong.

M Chew & Aileen Thong are using multimedia to serve minority groups by preserving their culture and self-esteem and to train them to use new communication technologies.

○ ChinaSource was founded in 1997 in response to a growing need for accurate information on China and its church. They engage the global Christian community with critical knowledge needed to collaborate with and serve the Chinese churches.

chinasource.org

○ The Confectionery Co. is a social enterprise in China that provides employment for people on the margins of society such as former prisoners, former sex and labor slaves and those who are mentally and physically challenged.

M Cuong & Trang Le are pastoring churches in South Vietnam and teaching at bible seminary.

M Daniel & Anna Mayhugh have served in the Philippines for 11 years with International Care Ministries. As Chief Programs Officer, Daniel oversees 10 field officers, who in turn work alongside 7,000 local pastors to meet spiritual and material needs among the ultrapoor.

○ English Language Institute China (ELIC) sends and supports teachers in under-served countries in Asia to mentor young adults who can, in turn, bring a hope and a future to others in their own nations.

elic.org

M Helen Tijsterman is fostering five children in Mongolia with Alpha Communities.

○ The Hong Kong Christian Kun Sun Association helps prisoners, rehabilitated persons and their families rebuild their lives through the manifestation of Christ's love. Their in-prison programs include Bible classes, evangelistic services, counseling, and chaplaincy services. Their rehabilitation programs include half way houses, discipleship training courses and vocational training.

ksa.org.hk

○ Hong Kong Young Life has a clear vision to introduce adolescents to Jesus Christ and help them grow in their faith. Their mission is to make a positive impact in the lives of the teenagers through Young Life's time-tested approach to come alongside kids and invest time into their lives.

hongkong.younglife.org

○ Inner City Ministries provides holistic care programs for Hong Kong's Nepalese ethnic minority such as mentoring programs, youth and young adult fellowship, parenting classes and sewing and craft workshops.

innercityministries.org

○ International Orality Network (ION) seeks to reach and disciple over 4 billion oral learners in the world today through using communication forms that are familiar within the culture, such as stories, proverbs, drama, songs, chants, and poetry.

orality.net

M John Alan and his wife have lived in China for over 20 years. He teaches English at a university in China and equips and mentors mainland Chinese to work cross-culturally in Central Asia.

M Nathan & Priscilla are serving with an international jewelry social enterprise that provides jobs to survivors of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Nathan's passion is to use business for God's kingdom purposes. Priscilla devotes her time to providing holistic care to trafficking survivors.

M Siew Ling Low serves in an NGO in Mongolia as a liaison to a government-run children's shelter. She organizes activities such as summer camps and has one-to-one meetings to mentor these children. She also runs a social enterprise business to empower ladies living in the ger district.

M Steve & Juniata Wible are training pastors and developing training curriculum in China and Asia.

○ Sundanese Christian Fellowship plant churches among the Sunda people of West Java, Indonesia. With a population of 34 million, the strongly Muslim Sundanese are one of the largest unreached people groups in the world.

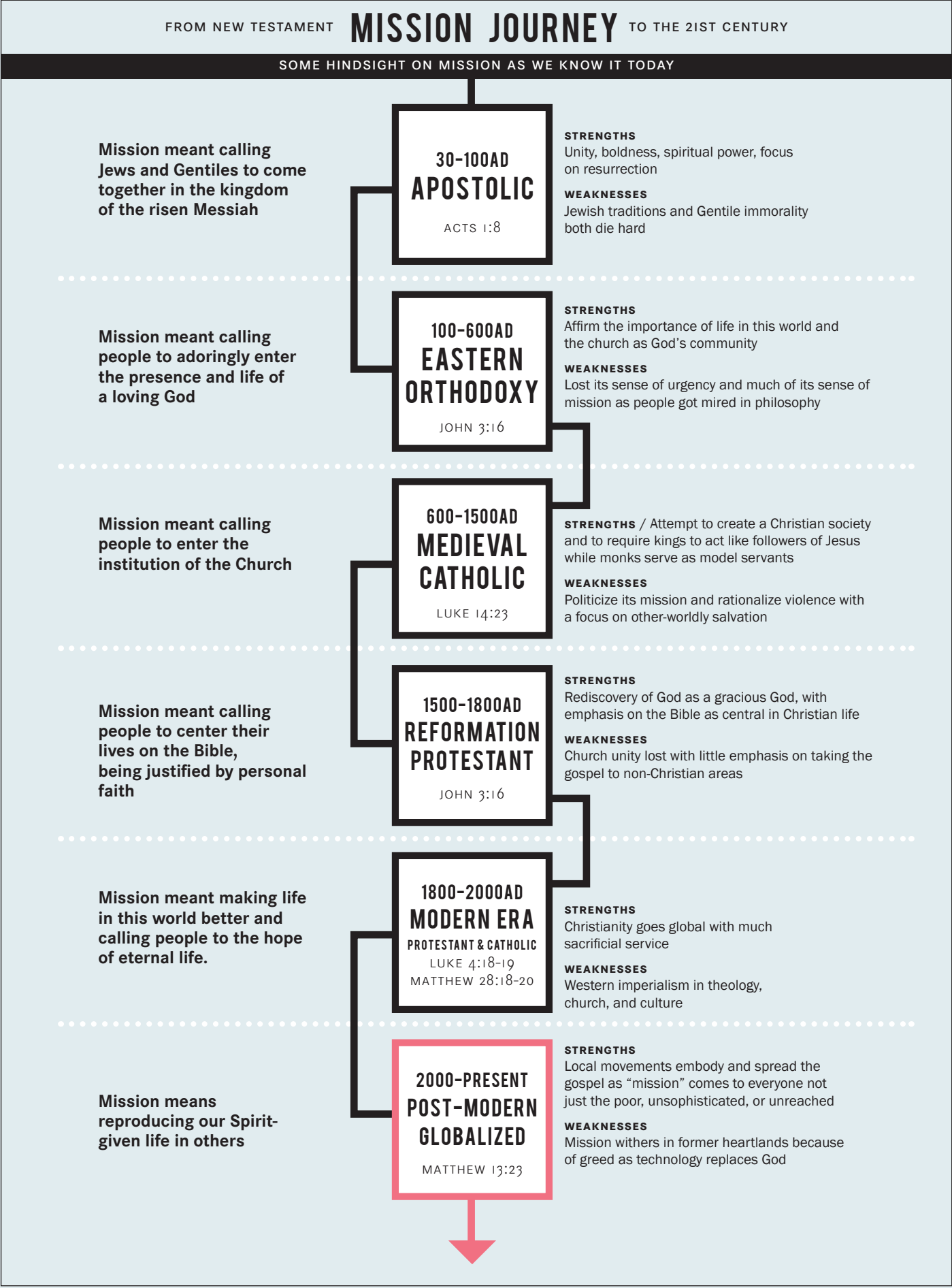
○ Systematic Asian Leadership Training (SALT) serves where church growth is explosive among low income and low education populations where there is an acute shortage of training and qualified church leaders. They help create a customized Bible curriculum and train leaders to use it with confidence and competence.

saltusa.org

M Thong Tao & Mary Le are involved with evangelism and church planting in South Vietnam. They also develop and equipp women leaders.

M Tim & Debbie Vinzani reach out to rural Chinese communities through a non-profit organization that seeks to alleviate poverty and to help children from these families attend school.

M Wilson Chan is using radio, Internet and new technologies to reach young Chinese adults with the gospel.





# OUT OF THE BOX

WRITER *Hill Chau* | PHOTOS *Jon Lau*

*Have you ever thought about how many roles you have in your life? You could be a parent, a son or daughter, a spouse, a sibling, a colleague, a student, a passenger, a reader... and maybe all at the same time. We all have different roles in our lives. In fact, our roles will always change according to the circumstances we are in. The following features a few wonderful stories from people just like you. Stories that remind us no matter which roles we are currently playing in our lives, that our identity as one called by God will never change, and to live out this identity into His perfect plan.*

## TRUST

### Alan Leung

Growing up in a traditional Asian family, working in a professional field was encouraged because it meant career stability and a healthy income for Alan Leung. Yet, even after he achieved these goals, he still experienced doubts. “Even though I felt like I could live the way I wanted, I still felt aimless in my life.” He always assumed he could return to God when he retired, however, God didn’t wait until then. He challenged Alan to get out of his complacency and showed him exactly where He wanted him to be. Serving in Men’s Fraternity allows Alan to use his professional social work knowledge to encourage his fellow brothers to always rely on God whatever the circumstances. “I see faith like a fog that God guides us through; you just need to believe and keep walking, and God will allow you to experience miraculous things.”



Carrie Tse

Before going on her first mission trip, Carrie Tse felt a sense of insecurity and inadequacy, not sure if she could really make a difference. “Sometimes I would think about how others would judge me and I wasn’t sure if I could relate to the circumstances that I would encounter on a trip.” As she opened up her heart to share and pray with her Care Group members, everything seemed to line up for her first trip. The Medical Cambodia Mission Trip last November was looking for dentists and doctors to provide dental and medical assistance in Kampot, Cambodia. Being a dentist herself, Carrie was a perfect fit. “I knew the power was not through me alone, but through God who worked in me.” Carrie said, “My responsibility was to take the first step, trusting God, and believing that this would be the first of many future opportunities to serve others.”



OBEY Quinnie Kwok

Quinnie Kwok has been to Mongolia seven times since 2013, most recently returning from a trip in August of 2016. This beautiful place, sitting just north of China, has become her second home. The yurts, the stars in the night sky, and the faces of the kids have been engraved on Quinnie’s heart. When she asked God if He had more for her to do, a loud and clear voice spoke directly to her. From a high school teacher, to a mission trip leader, now Quinnie is planning to become a missionary. “When you try to hide from God, God can still find you,” she says. “The signs from God just kept coming; to the point I had no place to hide and surrendered myself through obedience.” Prayer after prayer, tear after tear, Quinnie confirms that Mongolia is the place where God wants her to be. God continues to remind her that He “loves the kids more than [she] does.”



PRIVILEGE

Patrick and Merrian Rath

Growing up a Christian, Merrian has been serving the church and being use by God in many different ways. Then after Patrick came into the picture, together their ministry has been brought to a whole new level. As a married couple, Merrian and Patrick Rath co-founded the Agape Ministry in 2011 to provide support to people in Cebu, Philippines. Lives have been changed through their ministry. Going through tough times and setbacks, the couple continues to find ways to remind God-centered instead of self-centered. “When I look back, I see that was a process of transformation by God,” Merrian said. “God will use our experiences to nurture our relationship with Him.” Knowing God’s promises and presence encourages Patrick to keep moving forward; the key is to always remember that our God is the God of the past, the present and the future, as Patrick says “In everything we do in life, we are serving someone. We need to understand who we are serving.”

COURAGE

Daniel Tse

Growing up as a 3rd generation Christian, Daniel Tse has never doubted the existence of God. Being the head of his family, the leader of his company, the Associate Director of Men’s Ministry, and a full time student at the seminary, people might think that is too much to take on, but Daniel thinks otherwise. Daniel feels he is overwhelmed by God’s grace with all of these roles. “If you are always living in your comfort zone, there is no need for grace,” he said. “But if you step out in faith, you can see God’s hand is already there.” Daniel was fearful before, but the story of Gideon encourages him to live with a Warrior’s Heart and a faithful life. “You need to know that you are partnering with the greatest in the whole universe,” he added, “God chose you not because of your skills or your knowledge, but your willingness to join this great adventure that He promised us.”

*Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that as your faith continues to grow, our area of activities among you will greatly expand, so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you...*

APOSTLE PAUL





01



02

01  
*Lau Porpor and Leung Pak in our Elderly Home Visits program enjoy the fresh air at Inspiration Lake, Lantau Island, during an outing with Hope of the City volunteers.*

02  
*Jonathan, a long-term Elderly Home Visit volunteer, shares a scenic walk with Lau Porpor who seldom gets a break from the confines of her small flat.*

CASE STUDY

WRITER *Nelson Yau*

# Where Misery/Mercy Meet

*When He saw the crowds,  
He had compassion on them...  
Matthew 9:36*

It isn't so hard to imagine Jesus walking the streets of Sham Shui Po. It's the kind of place where He might well have chosen to spend His time. Lots of people with broken lives. Lots of people with wounds that run deep. Needy people. Harried women, restless migrants, throngs of children, more than a few men sleeping on mats in the underground passageways. Lost people. Harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Hope of the City's presence in Hong Kong's poorer communities, Sham Shui Po among them, is small. We are a small

organization with limited capabilities. We don't have big answers to offer. No great, important schemes, only small gestures. A few kind words. A smile. A hand extended in friendship. But we're not necessarily after grand achievements. We're not seeking to fix poverty or to convert people. In fact, we believe that "Jesus always leads us to littleness. It is the place where misery and mercy meet. It is the place where we encounter God."<sup>1</sup> So our first intention is to seek friendship with the poor. In doing so, we seek, with our friends, to be converted anew to God.<sup>2</sup>



03



04



05



06

03-06  
*Knowing that many children in Sham Shui Po struggle with academics, Hope of the City works to address these issues through various forms of academic support including providing 16 after-school English classes and private tutoring for 57 students every week. But the challenge towards studying is not just an academic issue. In understanding the constraints and limitations that their confined living space and family complexity may bring, it is also a motivational and*

*self-esteem issue. Hope of the City's desire is that these children develop a love for learning through the caring support they receive, while also gaining confidence and beginning to develop their own dreams for their future.*  
  
*Earlier this year, volunteers from FOVERO care group committed to serve together as part of Hope of the City's outreach efforts in Sham Shui Po. They 'adopted' 9 children to mentor on a regular basis. And instead of providing academic support, our volunteers*

*walk closely with them acting as model figures. It is our blessing to witness transformation in the children's lives, from being fearful at first they now have a smile on their faces. Our goal is not to treat people as projects but to demonstrate Christ's love through our volunteers' ongoing commitment and love.*

For this small work to move forward, it's not dollars that we need the most, it's people with hearts that genuinely care about the poor. They're not always easy to come by, and we can't produce them. Only God can do that, and so we are fully reliant on Him to provide them. He does.

In 2015, we undertook to organize monthly home visits to 64 lonely elderly living in public housing in Ngau Tau Kok. To do this, we needed no fewer than 60 volunteers willing to make a six-month commitment. Our recruitment efforts yielded only a handful or so, and as the launch date neared, we were far from having the numbers in place. We began fervently to present this need to God, pleading for not just any volunteers, but for the right ones, who would embrace these elderly as the beloved of our Father. Just days before the first visits, we had our 60 volunteers. Today, 80 volunteers visit 84 elderly people every month.

Something similar happened when we were presented with the need for 25 volunteer tutors for children from underprivileged families. We received requests from a small local church for English-speaking tutors for their Saturday kids' programme, and a community centre looking for long-term after-school tutors. We again placed these needs before God. Over the following weeks, 25 dedicated, Jesus-loving volunteers signed on to fill every slot.

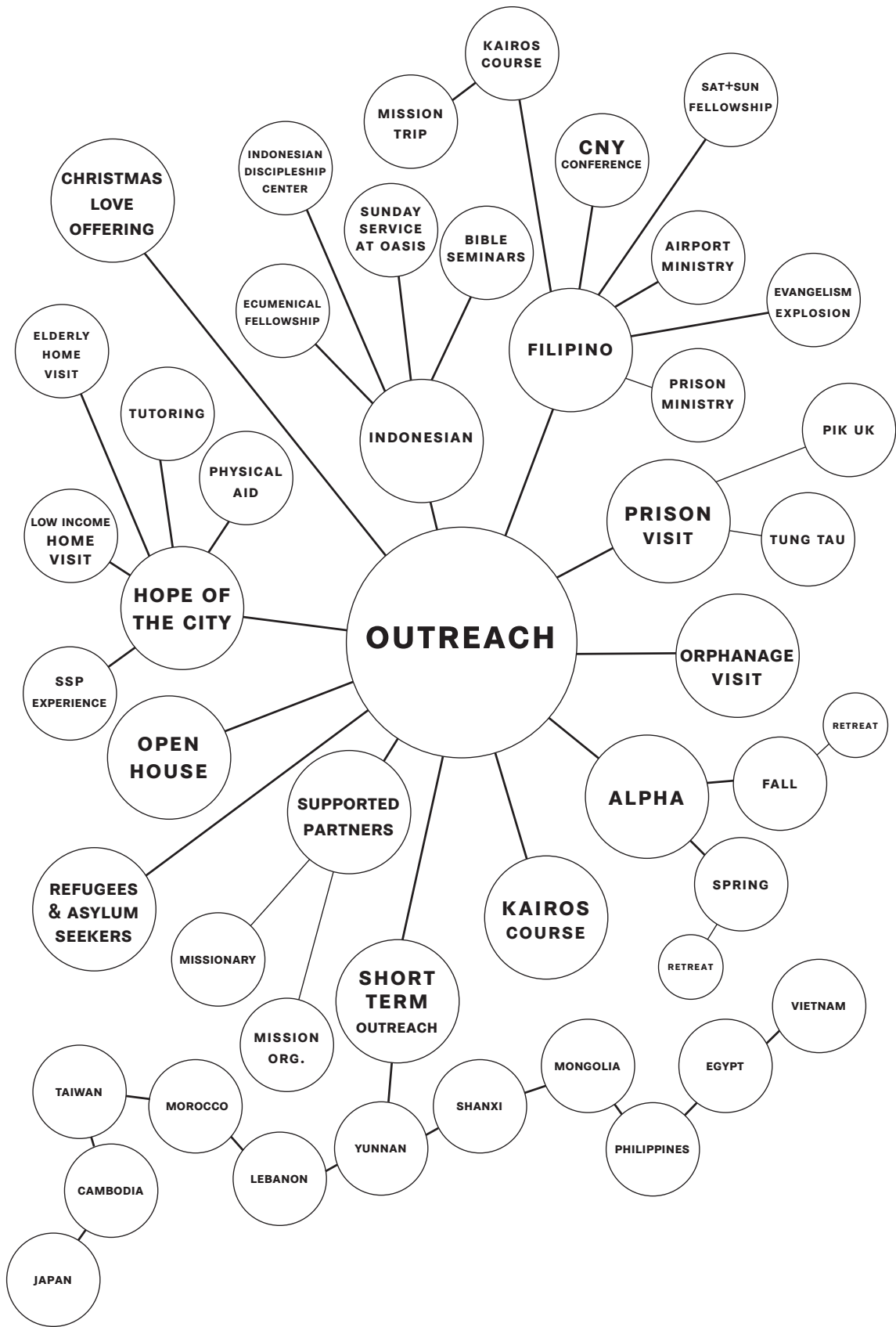
Relying completely on the hearts of compassion that Jesus' love has put in each one of us, we continue to seek out people willing to be with the poor, to step into their lives and participate in their daily struggles and triumphs. As we walk the littered streets and market lanes of our city, Jesus reminds us of His presence. He is here, in the midst of us, pointing out those neglected corners where His light is needed most, and providing the candles. ■

<sup>1</sup> Henri Nouwen, *The Road to Daybreak*, page 88.  
<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Christopher L. Heuertz and Christine D. Pohl, *Friendship at the Margins*



# What We Do

“You have more of that which you honour.” Pastor Brett often says this. Island ECC has always strived to honour missions and outreach and we believe this has been one reason for our growth. Honouring missions means that the Outreach Ministry is one of the larger ministries at Island ECC, which also means that we have a lot going on! This diagram helps explain the various ministries within Outreach and their activities.



# Get to Know Us

NINA NYHOFF coordinates support for refugees who come to Island ECC, provides Staff support to the Alpha courses and manages Short-Term Outreach trips.

RICKI BOTE coordinates the administrative details of Island ECC's Long-Term Supported Partners and keeps the Outreach department running smoothly.

SHANNON HILLIARD directs Community Outreach and is creating a network of parents with special needs children to support each other and to serve local families with similar needs.

HILL CHAU coordinates the Shenzhen orphanage visits, the prison ministry and the logistics for Short-Term Outreach trips.

SHERMAN CHAU is director of the Outreach Ministry and chair of the Outreach Committee.

NELSON YAU is director of Hope of the City, Island ECC's primary expression of local outreach.

TSZ YAN FUNG coordinates Hope of the City's tutoring program and Special Education Needs (SEN) support for children.

KEVIN IU coordinates volunteers for Hope of the City and also the Elderly Home Visits. He also researches new initiatives.



Riza Guevarra  
Director of Filipino Ministry

**WHAT DOES THE FILIPINO MINISTRY DO?**  
We serve Filipino domestic helpers in Hong Kong through activities like discipleship and Bible studies, counseling, prison ministry and an annual conference at Chinese New Year. We meet weekly on Saturday and Sunday on the 11/F at 633 King's Road.

I want Island ECC to be their family away from family in the Philippines, a safe place for them to find community and share their burdens. Now we're doing Precepts where we read the God's Word "raw" and dig into it together. For many ladies it's the first time they read the Bible for themselves.

**WHAT IS ONE HIGHLIGHT OF THE MINISTRY?**  
The airport ministry is a good opportunity to meet ladies who arrive as first-time domestic helpers. We give them a sim card so they can call or text back home to let people know they arrived safely. We give them a snack because they arrive with so little money and don't want to spend it on food for themselves. For many, it's their first time to leave their families and we know there are people who try to take advantage of them.

**WHAT DOES THE WORD "ENOUGH" MEAN FOR YOUR MINISTRY?**  
We've had enough of ladies who are complacent in their faith, who don't take their identity as a disciple in Christ seriously. Many of them say, "I'm praying but I'm not reading my Bible daily." If we want to be mature in our faith, we need to discipline ourselves and make regular time for Him in our lives, not talk to the Lord just whenever we want to or need to.



Riani Pardede  
Director of Indonesian Ministry

**WHAT DOES THE INDONESIAN MINISTRY DO?**  
We reach out to domestic helpers. We run Bible studies, prayer times and a Sunday worship service. We have interest classes in the afternoon on weekends on subjects like English, Cantonese and crafts. We also have monthly outreaches to Muslim ladies and on Indonesian or Hong Kong holidays. We meet on Saturday and Sunday at Island ECC's ministry centre in Fortress Hill.

I believe companionship and friendship is an important part of my ministry. I often accompany someone to court or to the labour tribunal for a contract dispute, or help them to enroll in skills training and organizations like Christian Action. I often go with them to the airport at the end of their contract.

**WHAT IS ONE HIGHLIGHT OF THE MINISTRY?**  
The Indonesian Discipleship Centre is partnership among the Indonesian churches in Hong Kong with students coming from 5 different churches. The IDC holds classes in subjects like Soteriology (salvation), Christology (who is Jesus), Old Testament and New Testament introductions. We also give them practical skills like leading worship, counseling and greeting and ushering. They graduate with a lay certificate in ministry, so they can be equipped to minister and serve.

**WHAT DOES THE WORD "ENOUGH" MEAN FOR YOUR MINISTRY?**  
It's never enough when you lead a ministry and teach and do counselling. You do the best you can, but it's never enough. You want to see more people come to Jesus, that's why we go out right? To meet more people and lead them to Christ. Our time is never enough, so we need to be disciplined to make sure we have enough intimate time with the Lord.



Books & Things

Our minds are a gift from God. We ask children to treasure learning while they are young. We hope that these resources will help to deepen your faith and understanding of God.

BOOKS



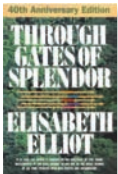
THE WORLD IS NOT OURS TO SAVE  
by Tyler Wigg-Stevenson

One reason to read this book? It won the 2014 Christianity Today Book Award for Christianity and Culture. A second reason? The author steers away from cause-driven Christianity to a stillness in our vocation, a message that is quite similar to one of this magazine's feature stories. You know what they say about great minds...



MISREADING SCRIPTURE WITH WESTERN EYES  
by E. Randolph Richards and Brandon J. O'Brien

The Bible is a document written in the context of the Ancient Near East but we often can't help ourselves from reading it from our modern, mostly Western perspective. The authors draw on their own cross-cultural experiences to shed light on key areas where modern readers have significantly different assumptions from what might be going on in the text.



THROUGH GATES OF SPLENDOR  
by Elisabeth Elliot

Elisabeth Elliot was one of the most influential women of the 20th century. After suffering from dementia, she herself passed through the Gates of Splendor in 2015 at age 88. This is the story of her husband's death at the hands of an isolated Ecuadorian tribe he was trying to reach, and of her return to this same tribe two years later to continue his work. A classic piece of missions literature.

APPS



Unreached of the Day

- The Unreached People of the Day app presents a photo, map, basic statistics, profile text and prayer items for a different unreached people group each day.
- Browse by country, people name or date. Expand your vision and passion for unreached peoples with prayer.
- Develop a heart to take the Good News of Jesus Christ to some of the least-reached peoples in the world.



Prayercast

- Prayercast exists to activate victorious, world-changing prayer and worship through mass media and the arts to advance the gospel to the masses.
- A short video to present the current status of the country of your choice and prayer requests focused on the spiritual needs.
- Special video topics, e.g. Ebola, Islamic State (IS), Unborn Face, etc. to help you updated with the current events all over the world.



Bible YouVersion

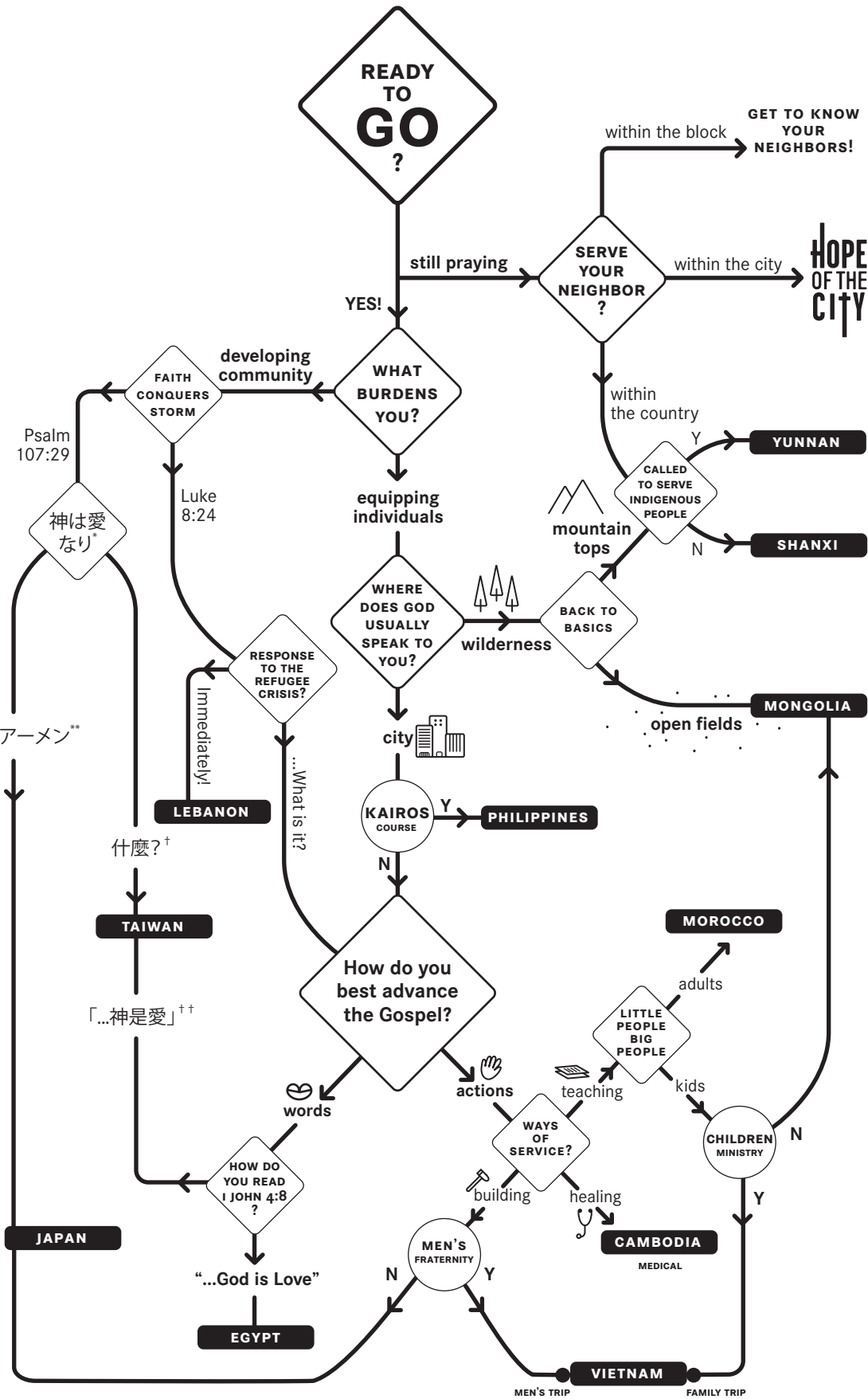
- Study the bible with hundreds of plans. You'll find devotionals, as well as plans that lead you through specific topics, portions of the Bible, or even the entire Bible in a year. Introduce "New to Faith" devotions to your new believer friends.
- Offline Bibles in multiple languages for you and your friends to read, study and share with the bible whenever and wherever you are.
- Explore the Bible with your friends. Share honest conversations about Scripture with a people you know and trust. Learn along with them as you see what they're discovering.

Wherever You Go

One of the most common questions we are asked is, "Which mission trip should I go on?" To help you answer that question, our team of artists and engineers have created our first ever "Trip-O-Matic" diagram. This flow chart is light-hearted but it is designed to get you to think more seriously about where your passions and giftings lie and where God might be leading you.

It is also a real and practical tool: each outcome is an actual and official Short-Term Outreach trips organized by Island ECC. So whether you find the right trip and are ready to go, or still have questions, we'd love to talk to you!

Contact us at  
go@islandecc.hk



\* God loves you. \*\* Amen.  
† "What is that?" †† God is love.





# GO BEYOND

GO CONFERENCE 2017

20-21 JANUARY

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: TIMOTHY DAVIS

Register at the Connect Counter at 1/F Island ECC,  
or online at [islandecc.hk/go2017](http://islandecc.hk/go2017)



**ISLAND**  
EVANGELICAL COMMUNITY CHURCH