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### Pastoral Letter, June, 2017

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

One of the greatest benefits of being a pastor flows out of one of a pastor's greatest challenges which also happens to be perhaps the pastor's greatest privilege: preaching the Word of God to Christ's church week after week. Preaching every Sunday is a challenge because the pastor must know the message to the original audience with some depth; then he must discern how it applies to his congregation. Next, the pastor must discern how to communicate that word with conviction, clarity, and compassion. In this process, the preacher himself must be convinced of the utter necessity for Christ's church to hear, know, and trust this Word from God.

The great personal benefit to the pastor is that in the hours of careful Bible study, God speaks the Word into his life. As a pastor, I get to learn the Word of God, and more than that, hear God speak through His Word. Of course, all of God's children have this privilege, but the required discipline of study allows the preacher to learn more than we would ever otherwise discover. Another part of the challenge comes in the pastor responding rightly to God's Word. If it remains merely information to us, it will have little impact upon Christ's congregation. But, if by the grace of God, the preacher humbles himself under that Word, then there will be much fruit in his life and in the church. When this happens, the pastor grows.

Recently, our pastors and Board have been thinking together about how we may grow more men into the leadership of the church. As I have thought about that I have been challenged by the example and pattern of Jesus that we saw last Sunday in Isaiah 50:4:

The Lord God has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught.

In the passage, it is God's promised Servant, the Messiah—Jesus who speaks. We discover that Jesus was prepared to serve by having God the Father speak His Word to Him. This is the only means to grow leaders for Christ's church and for families. We need men to give themselves to hearing the Word of God morning by morning, and then obeying the Word that God has spoken (Isaiah 50:5-ff). Our pastors and leaders must preach and teach the Word to facilitate that, but ultimately, we need God to graciously draw our men into His Word more and more.

Brothers, would you begin to take this passage and use it in your daily prayer: *Lord Jesus, awaken my ear to hear Your Word morning by morning, and give me the ability to speak Your Word to others so that I may have a word to sustain the weary.* Sisters, would you pray this for yourselves, but also for the men in our congregation? May we all pray together that God would raise up leaders for His church from our congregations, and that some of them may serve here in C4 even as God calls some to serve His church in other places.

And while you're praying remember to pray for your pastors also. Pray that God would awaken us morning by morning to feed upon His Word. Pray that we may have grace to understand and apply God's Word when we preach. And pray that we may preach with conviction, clarity, and courage.

During the month of July (from July 10-August 10), I will take a month of sabbatical rest. Please pray for Mrs. House and I during this time that God will fill us with His Word and refresh our souls. Our brothers, David Lam and Don Fong, will be helping with the various needs while I am away. Thank you for your prayer and your grace to us.

Praying for godly leaders with you,

*PASTOR HOUSE*