

## Pastor's Word -- My Church, My Home

Rev. Almon LI (2/22/2014)

This October was a joyful time to me because my son, Enoch, and my daughter-in-law, Winnie, got married in this month. I was gratified and happy, not only because of my son's marriage, for which I had waited patiently for a long time, but also for the enthusiastic help and joyful participation of our brothers and sisters in the wedding. I really felt their love and care to our family, just as the Bible said that "rejoice with those rejoice".



In this October, HCAC also celebrated its 14<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We thank God that on this special occasion, Rev. Rod Russell-Brown, the President of C&MA, was present and preached in our Sunday Service. In his sermon, Rev. Russell-Brown reminded us that we should be alert to the conflicts among church members.

In fact, "love" and "conflict" should not co-exist because love can resolve all kinds of conflicts. To build up a relationship with love in church is God's will that has been clearly made known to believers. Jesus instructed in John 13:34-35 that "you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." It is however sadly that none of us can satisfy God in this particular aspect; we always have conflicts because we have little love.

In his sermon, the President also mentioned that one of the causes of conflict was that believers adopted the "consumer's attitude" when they came to the church. They would feel bad or even angry whenever their expectations could not be satisfied by the people or things they encountered. Then they would try to think or do something to change these people or things. Or finally, they would choose to leave the church. This is how the ordinary believers handle conflicts. But we should ask: does God want us to leave the church?

Some believers might consider that their church was unable to convert their family members or spouses, so they brought the latter to another church. Then they left the church with this seemingly justified reason. But by so doing, they thought that they could use their own methods to convert unbelievers. They forgot what Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:6 that "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth".

Church is our spiritual home in which we serve and grow as God planned. Church is neither a hospital nor supermarket. You can choose another hospital if you think that this one is not so good; or you can go to another supermarket if you find that this one does not have the products you want.

I recalled that my family was too poor to buy a TV set when I was young. I admired my neighbours who had TV sets and I stood by their doors to peep at the TV programs. No matter how I admired them, I had never thought that I should become a member of another family because I loved my own one.

Brothers and sisters, church is not a building but the body of Christ, of which believers are members. We should know that church is our spiritual home, not a place to satisfy our desires. God's will is that we should use the talents He gave us to build up the church together.

Brothers and sisters, I hope that we can understand God's will that church is our home. No matter what situation our church is, we should protect our church with our love and support this spiritual home with actions.