

The Baptist Tabernacle of Los Angeles

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Dr. R. L. Hymers, Jr.
Founding Pastor
Dr. Christopher L. Cagan
Pastor

December, 2019

Dear Friend:

I wish I could send you a happier Christmas letter. But, to be truthful, I must tell you that in the past year and a half we experienced a truly horrible church split.

It began several months before last year. Our senior deacon began having secret meetings with another pastor. The two of them devised a plan to destroy our church. The two of them made plans to start another church and pull out as many people as possible from us. By the time I found out about this it was too late to avoid a major church split.

It started when a disgruntled deacon made an attempt to get me into a “fist-fight.” When I refused to fight him, he left the church. Soon others followed. The chairman of the deacons put pornographic photos of himself on his website. One of the “splitters” attempted to blackmail me with these photos, and the police were involved. The chairman of the deacons and his wife left our church.

At this time, the senior deacon became openly active. He left our church and began to pull out as many of our people as possible. Because the senior deacon had been a leader in our church for decades, many people followed him and left our church. By the time the split was over, he was able to pull out over half of our people.

About this time my physical problems flared up and I was not able to preach in both Sunday services. A seminary student preached on Sunday mornings. But he was too inexperienced to stand with me when most of his close friends left in the split. On February 20th this young man broke fellowship with me. He and his mother left the church and began attending new-evangelical churches. This was too much for me, since I considered this young preacher to be a close personal friend. On February 23, I resigned as pastor and Dr. Christopher Cagan became the new pastor. I was appointed as Pastor Emeritus. I was too weak to attend the meetings. On March 3, Dr. Cagan announced my retirement and his own appointment as pastor. Dr. Cagan is the greatest Christian I have ever known, other than Pastor Wurmbbrand. Without his leadership our church would never have recovered.

But good things continued to happen. On January 26 the 41st language was added to our website. That same day (January 26) our “app” went up on iPhone and Android. Since then thousands of people throughout the world have joined us through the “app,” thanks largely to a friend, a missionary to the Jewish people in New York City. Then our 42nd language was added – the main language of Malawi in Africa. On February 23, Dr. Cagan became the official pastor and I was installed as Pastor Emeritus.

Needless to say, I was weak and sick from all this turmoil. I am very thankful for my wife – who stood with me through all this. From February 27 until March 20 I took her on an extended vacation to Arizona for a rest. On March 20, I returned to preach on Sunday evenings and teach on Saturday evenings.

***OUR WEBSITE OFFERS HUNDREDS OF WORD-FOR-WORD SERMONS
IN FORTY-TWO LANGUAGES AT WWW.SERMONSFORTHEWORLD.COM.***

Since then our church building was put up for sale. On April 14 my 78th birthday was celebrated at the old building. On May 7th I started a discipleship group for the faithful young people in our church, using “Evangelism Explosion” as our textbook. From May 22 to May 29, Dr. Cagan took my wife and me to the San Francisco area to visit a Chinese Baptist church and its fine pastor. We also met with Mike and Mona Riley, long-time pastor of the church I started in Marin County. Mike gave me much encouragement, and I was invited to speak at their church on its 50th anniversary. Others were not so kind, but blamed me for our church split, causing me even more pain.

On July 28 we held a big party at our church for Dr. Cagan’s 66th birthday. It was announced then that our new church in the San Gabriel Valley would be named, “The Chinese Baptist Tabernacle of Greater Los Angeles.” We have purchased a new building there and escrow will be closed soon.

Late in July I took Mrs. Hymers for another brief vacation at Oceanside. My wife, Ileana, is undoubtedly the best pastor’s wife in the whole wide world. My son Robert Leslie and I sent her and both her parents to Israel. On November 17 I began a series of sermons on Sunday morning and evening. It’s the first time I have been physically able to preach both Sunday services for a long time. Under Dr. Cagan’s leadership and hard work, two young men have been saved, and several Chinese students have begun to attend our church. Dr. Cagan has sold his house in downtown Los Angeles, and is looking for another house nearer the San Gabriel building. We will move our church to the new building in the next few months.

The church split seems to be over. I was told a few days ago, at the City of Hope, that my cancer appears to be cured. Dr. Cagan, my wife and I celebrated Thanksgiving at my house with my boys and our grandchildren, and most of those who stood with us in this great time of trial. We had a wonderful time together!

May the Lord bless all of you! Please remember to pray for us as we start the Chinese church!



I am very proud of my family. From left to right, Wesley, Leslie with baby Hannah, myself, Ileana with baby Sarah, Leslie’s wife Jin, Ileana’s mother Linda and her brother Erwin Cuellar.

May Jesus Christ our Saviour be praised!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "R. L. Hymers, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

R. L. Hymers, Jr.,
D.Min., Th.D., Litt.D.
Philippians 4:13

“I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord” (Psalm 27:13-14).

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