

Paul Wong's Christian Impact on my Life

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During my recent trip to Toronto, I was very delighted to be invited by Lilian to write something about the Prof. Paul Wong I have known.

I have known Prof. Wong since I immigrated to Canada from China in September 1991. At that time, when my parents, my siblings, and I were united with my aunt in Peterborough, I was still a teenager and a high schooler.

I encountered an obstacle when I tried to register at the Peterborough Collegiate and Vocational School (PCVS), a high school close by, because of my deficiency in English. Despite receiving a good score on my high school English subject back in China, I hardly spoke any English. I was grateful that Prof. Wong went to see the principal on my behalf. As a result, I was admitted on the condition that I would complete a 6-month ESL class offered by the city.

At that time, Peterborough was a small town with less than 200 Chinese. As a new immigrant with a language barrier, I was eagerly looking for other Chinese to associate with them. One day, my sister and my dad met a stranger (Paulina) on the street, and she invited us to attend the Sunday Service with a Chinese group named “Peterborough Chinese Christian Fellowship” (PCCF).

It was my first time stepping into a church and attending a Sunday Service. Over there, I met Prof. Wong, a Psychology professor, and the founder of PCCF. There, I felt that God opened His arms and welcome me.

There were a few things that surprised me, when I first met Paul Wong. “What? A professor but also a preacher? A pastor who can also be a funny guy who can make jokes?”

Yes, Paul did not speak Cantonese very well, my mother tongue, but he spoke Mandarin. As a preacher in PCCF, his sermons were always very touching and engaging. He was a funny guy and easy to talk to. Since then, I attended the Sunday Service in a Canadian Church and participated in the afternoon and the Friday night Bible Study, hosted by Paul and Lilian Wong in their home regularly.

Paul is a loving, caring, and faithful Christian. He always checked on me and asked how I did in school. He offered to help me in practicing my English conversational skills. He also offered me helpful advice in university application. Of course, he was keen to help me understand the Bible.

At that time, there were lots of new immigrants in the fellowship, mostly students and the “boat people” from Southeast Asia. Paul always welcomed them, helped them to settle, and connected them with other people in the fellowship.

Through Paul’s teaching and his guidance, I started to learn more about Christianity and Jesus Christ. I always wanted to be a scientist and I had been struggling over religious beliefs, because I thought that one could not be a Christian and a scientist at the same time.

Paul assured me, with his own example, that a Christian can also be scientist or professor. In the year of 1993, after attending the Church and Bible Study for two years, I finally accepted Jesus as my personal savior. I was baptized by Paul. This was one of the happiest days in my life, and my life had forever changed.

After graduating from high school at PCVS, I went to Queen’s University in Ontario. I completed several undergraduate programs and a graduate program. After graduation, I became a Biostatistician involved in clinical research. Now, I am a scientist and a Christian.

Thanks Paul. You are awesome!