

Pastor's Faith Is Key to Changing Lives in Quiet Hawaiian Resort

Damien Wong teaches wealthy tourists as well as homeless people who frequent the oceanside community of Kailua-Kona

Simple faith is the key to unleashing a revival of power where miracles and signs and wonders are commonplace, a pastor and church are learning in the small oceanside community of Kailua-Kona on the island of Hawaii.

Life Church is a small independent charismatic congregation where evening services continue into the early morning hours. People from all walks of life are coming to be healed, delivered and set free by the power of God.

Nearly 10 years ago pastor Damien Wong, 46, was grieving over the premature death of his first wife when someone suggested he pray for her to be raised from the dead. A nominal Christian at the time, Wong thought, Why not? She can't become deader.

She was not resurrected, but Wong began to ponder things he recalled hearing in church about the power of God. He remembered songs that glorified the power of great things God had done in the past.

Everything he thought about seemed to be in the context of the

past—what God “used to do.” But where was that power in the church today to meet people’s needs? he questioned.

Six years ago the pastor of Life Church resigned to move back to the Midwest. He challenged Wong to succeed him.

With no ambition for spiritual leadership at the time, Wong was surprised at the opportunity before him. He took it to prayer. It was to become a vehicle for getting all the answers he was looking for in his quest for more spiritual truth.

Wong credits the Holy Spirit with bringing several key spiritual mentors across his path in the early years of his pastoral ministry. He studied them closely, and each one seemed to have a key to the complete puzzle. A Nigerian evangelist visited, ministering with signs and wonders. He challenged Wong to have faith in God without limits.

Recently, James and Kim Stanton of Remnant Warrior Ministries have moved from their California headquarters to join the staff of Life Church of Hawaii in Kailua-Kona. Wong said the couple brought years of valuable experience and grounded biblical teaching on deliverance and spiritual warfare.

In the last year, God has transformed Life Church. There is no lack of testimonies of divine healing supported with medical reports as evidence. Drug addicts and occult followers now have found freedom in Christ.

Life Church is located in the midst of an oceanside resort community. Tourists frequent the area on foot, and the homeless are always close by. On an average Sunday, first-time

visitors make up 50 percent of the congregation.

Wong explains that some people's lives block simple faith from working. Before praying, he will probe and ask questions to discern if there are any blockages to faith.

Wong says he relies on the Holy Spirit to show him how to "hook" hindrances to faith, pull them out of people, curse the blocks and let them go so the power of God can manifest in people's circumstances and lives. He said street people and drug addicts rarely have anything to block their faith because they usually are destitute and hopeless but ready and eager to receive a miracle.

Wong said when he prays for a person, he always prays believing God for a complete and immediate miracle.

"Simple faith in God provides forgiveness for all sins, immediately," Wong said, and added: "It's the same when we pray with someone for a miracle. We should expect God to completely heal and completely deliver, immediately."