

Chinese Underground Leaders Earn Degrees From King's U

✖ In a historic first, seven Chinese leaders from the underground church received Doctor of Ministry seminary degrees Sunday from The King's University in Los Angeles. Founder Jack Hayford said he believes The King's University "was raised up for this time."

While the church continues to grow in China, very few leaders have theological training. A couple of the Chinese graduates were preaching on the streets only weeks after being converted and a couple were trained in business but are now pastoring churches.

While a few degrees have been granted to Chinese students from seminaries in Singapore, this was a first for an American University to grant DMin degrees. Faculty from The King's University traveled back and forth to China and taught using translators.

The degree requirements are the same as for American students. However, there is some secrecy about details of the program because of the pressure the government puts on the underground church.

For example, their translator said that as recently as three days before graduation, it was unclear if the government would let them leave the country. He also told stories of one of the graduates who was jailed and his church bulldozed by the government several years ago.

The leaders are a part of what some call the "Third Church," a name often used to describe the Chinese underground church in urban areas. The underground church has historically been mainly in rural areas. The registered government-approved "Three-Self Church" accounts for about half of the estimated

140 million Chinese believers.

During the commencement, which granted 117 degrees—the most in the young university's history—Founder Hayford announced that Dr. Paul Chappell, the executive vice president, will now be known as “co-founder of The King's.” He explained how he felt God told him in February, 1996, to “found a seminary.”

At about the same time Chappell, not knowing that, told his wife his dream would be to help Hayford found a seminary. Since the summer of 1996, they have worked together to found The King's College and Seminary which received its designation as a university a year ago.

“Paul's partnership from the inception of this university has been incalculable and pivotal in every way in steadily advancing our influence in equipping leaders for the 21st century,” Hayford said. He presented Chappell with a grand proclamation designating him as “co-founder of The King's University.”

Besides the degrees to the Chinese leaders, The King's granted its first “graduate certificate in Messianic Jewish studies.”

Bishop Ken Ulmer, pastor of Faithful Central Bible Church who served for two years as president of The King's, challenged the graduates in a stirring message to “choose Jesus, choose holiness, choose Holy Spirit and choose truth.”