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THE INFLUENCE OF W. CARL HUNKER
ON TAIWAN BAPTISTS

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Daniel Robert Slott
December 2021

APPROVAL SHEET

THE INFLUENCE OF W. CARL HUNKER
ON TAIWAN BAPTISTS

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For Taryn,
my best friend, greatest encourager, and partner in the gospel.
You are God's good and gracious gift to me,
for which I am eternally grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	vii
PREFACE.....	viii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Research Question.....	8
Methodology	8
Interviewees	14
Summary of Research	20
Significance.....	20
Chapter Summaries	21
Delimitations	22
Conclusion	23
2. HUNKER’S SIGNIFICANCE	24
Life before Taiwan.....	25
Life in Taiwan	33
Life after Taiwan.....	48
Hunker’s Impact.....	51
Conclusion	56
3. HUNKER’S CARE FOR PEOPLE.....	58
The Focus of Hunker’s Care	60
Expressions of Hunker’s Care.....	66
The Source of Hunker’s Care.....	74

Chapter	Page
The Impact of Hunker’s Care.....	78
Conclusion	79
4. HUNKER’S PASSION FOR THE LOST.....	81
For People	83
For Taiwan.....	87
For Mainland China	94
For the Chinese Diaspora.....	97
For Contextualization.....	99
Conclusion	102
5. HUNKER’S UNDERSTANDING OF CULTURE	103
Culture Assimilation	105
Chinese National History.....	108
Cultural Values	109
Chinese Mainline Religions.....	119
Chinese Folk Religion.....	126
Conclusion	137
6. HUNKER’S COMMITMENT TO INDIGENEITY	138
Local Church Indigeneity.....	140
Convention Indigeneity	156
Seminary Indigeneity	163
Conclusion	170
7. CONCLUSION	172
Summary	173
Missiological Reflections Based on Hunker’s Principles	178
Recommendations for Future Research	191

	Page
Final Personal Reflection.....	193
Conclusion	194
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	195

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IMBA	International Mission Board Archives, Richmond, VA
SBHLA	Southern Baptist Historical Library Archives, Nashville, TN
TBTSL	Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary Library, Taipei, Taiwan

PREFACE

The Lord's timing is always perfect. My missions-sending organization approved my transfer to Taipei two weeks into my PhD studies. Desiring to learn more about my new home and host culture, I wrote my first seminar paper on the history of Christianity in Taiwan. God used that research project, and many more since, to make me a better cross-cultural missionary.

PhD work is a worthy endeavor, but it comes at a high cost, especially to loved ones. I am grateful for God's grace in the process and for those who encouraged, helped, and guided me. I owe special thanks to my committee, all who have invested in me since my days as an MDiv student. My supervisor, Chuck Lawless, has been a friend, counselor, mentor, and constant source of wisdom for over a decade. Professor Timothy Beougher has been a wise teacher, steadfast encourager, and faithful prayer advocate. Professor George Martin has been one of the most influential voices in my missiological understanding and application over the past fifteen years. I am grateful for these men and the examples they set in the home, classroom, church, and mission field.

A PhD dissertation is the cumulative effort of many people. While I had the honor to pull it all together, many contributed to the process. I am grateful for Jim Graham, who was the first person to tell me about Carl Hunker; Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary (TBTS) president, Tsai Rei-Yi, who organized my interview list and introduced me to each person; the TBTS community, who opened their library and facilities to me; my translators Vivian, who helped me with written interviews, and Ken, who helped me dialogue with numerous individuals; IMB archivist, Jim Berwick, who collected and sent me Hunker's work history; Hunker's children, David and Joyce Lynn, who were eager to help and spoke transparently about their father; my Chinese co-

workers and missionary colleagues, who encouraged me to do doctoral work and helped along the way; my interviewees, who recalled decades-old memories and shared their stories; former dean of the Billy Graham School, Adam Greenway, who encouraged me to enter the PhD program; professor John Klaassen, who pushed me to give my best; my fellow coursework classmates, who challenged and inspired me each time we met; my editor, Torey Teer, who helped me improve my writing and clarify my meaning; my sending church, Highview Baptist Church, who has been a faithful prayer supporter; Church of the Journey, who has graciously encouraged and supported me; the SBTS Research Doctoral Studies department, who kindly guided me every step of the way; and my missions-sending agency and supervisors, Jacob Franklin and Jim Graham, for granting me approval and time for PhD work.

I especially want to thank my wife, Taryn, who was the first to encourage me to do doctoral work and has remained my strongest supporter since. I do not have the words to fully express my thanks to her. She is without a doubt the strongest woman I know and the greatest wife a man could ask for. Her beauty, charisma, and wit are beyond compare. I also want to thank my children, Penelope, Eleanor, and Josiah, who have been a constant source of joy throughout this arduous process. Thank you for your love and support.

Finally, I am thankful for God's grace and kindness to me in Christ. He has divinely worked through every logistical detail and administrative process to allow me to complete this degree. He has humbled, challenged, and grown me, through which I trust he has conformed me more into the image of the Son. To him be all honor and praise.

Daniel Slott

Taipei, Taiwan

April 2021

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the year AD 607, Emperor Yang of the Chinese Sui Dynasty dispatched a naval expedition off the Southeast coast of China to explore a mysterious island fishermen recently discovered.¹ The explorers reported an island with beautiful terraces cascading into the sea, but due to more pressing military matters, the island, which would later become known as Taiwan, was largely left untapped for centuries. Over nine hundred years later, in 1517, Portuguese traders sailed north along the eastern coast of China, searching for new trade territory.² When a storm pulled the ships off course, the crew spotted Taiwan island. Upon seeing the beautiful coastline, the sailors exclaimed, “*Ihla Formosa*,” which means “beautiful island.”³

The Dutch were the first foreign power to occupy Taiwan.⁴ Landing in 1624, the Dutch East India Company built Fort Zeelandia near Tainan, Taiwan.⁵ They then began to cultivate the island; they divided the island into provinces, established a government, and facilitated the arrival of Protestant missionaries.⁶ However, Dutch

¹ Hollington K. Tong, *Christianity in Taiwan: A History* (Taipei: China Post, 1961), 2.

² John C. Caldwell, *Let's Visit Formosa: Island Home of Free China* (New York: John Day Company, 1956), 9.

³ Tong, *Christianity in Taiwan*, 4–5.

⁴ Charles Brewer Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan: Religion and State, 1660–1990* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), 3. See also Yang-En Cheng, “Calvinism and Taiwan,” *Theology Today* 66, no. 2 (July 2009): 184.

⁵ Ronald G. Knapp, “The Shaping of Taiwan’s Landscapes,” in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. Murray A. Rubinstein, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 12.

⁶ Knapp, “The Shaping of Taiwan’s Landscapes,” 13.

occupation, including missionary endeavors, was short-lived. Dutch rule lasted until 1661 when Zheng Chen-Gong (also known as Koxinga) overthrew the foreign occupiers and placed Taiwan under his authority.⁷

Former Taiwanese Ambassador to the United States Hollington Tong wrote, “The expulsion of the Dutch was followed by a period of 200 years when Christianity lay dormant in Taiwan. No missionary venture was made by Western Christians during these years.”⁸ It was not until 1860 that Christian work in Taiwan resumed through the missional efforts of the English Presbyterian Church.⁹ However, while Presbyterians have engaged Taiwan continuously since the 1860s, Baptist work did not begin until 1948 when the All Chinese Baptist Convention (ACBC) sent Chinese pastor Yang Mei-Tsai and Foreign Mission Board (FMB) missionary Bertha Smith to start new Baptist work on the province of Taiwan.¹⁰

In 1949, a year after the Baptist convention sent Yang and Smith to Taiwan, Mao Zedong, leader of the Chinese Communist forces, defeated Chiang Kai-Shek as leader of Mainland China and established the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Generalissimo Chiang and loyalists of the Republic of China (ROC) fled to Taiwan.¹¹ Two to three million mainlanders followed Chiang Kai-Shek to the shores of Taiwan to ensure the continuity of the ROC government.¹² This new wave of migrants, which included soldiers, professors, religious leaders, politicians, and anyone loyal to the ROC

⁷ Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan*, 4.

⁸ Tong, *Christianity in Taiwan*, 21.

⁹ Cheng, “Calvinism and Taiwan,” 190.

¹⁰ Carl Hunker, “Outline for *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution*,” 1970, Carl Hunker Collection, SBHLA; Carl Hunker, “Formosa: Isle of Hope,” Carl Hunker Collection, SBHLA.

¹¹ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Modern China* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1954), 121.

¹² Hunker estimates that there were three million Chinese refugees. See W. Carl Hunker, *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1970), 9.

who had the means to flee, brought not only an influx of people but also their religious values, practices, and beliefs.¹³

Included in this influx of people were Baptist missionaries, who saw Taiwan as an opportunity to continue their ministry to the Chinese after their expulsion from Mainland China.¹⁴ Historian Murray Rubinstein writes, “In Taiwan, the Baptists chose to work with the refugee mainlanders and, by 1987, their church was about twelve thousand strong. The Baptist had become the largest and most influential of the more mainline denominational churches that worked with the two million-strong mainlander minority.”¹⁵ Carl Hunker arrived in Taiwan five years after the first group of Baptist missionaries.¹⁶

W. Carl Hunker (April 24, 1916–January 7, 2016; Chinese name 杭克安; *Háng kè'ān*) served with the FMB from 1946 to 1986.¹⁷ After his appointment in 1946, Hunker, along with his wife, Jeanette, and son, David, sailed to Suzhou, Jiangsu, China, arriving in December of that same year. He spent the next two years learning the Wu dialect in Suzhou before relocating to the Philippines due to the growing influence of Communism in northern China.¹⁸ He relocated to Baguio, Philippines, for the next two

¹³ Phillip Clart and Charles B. Jones, introduction to *Religion in Modern Taiwan: Tradition and Innovation in a Changing Society*, ed. Phillip Clart and Charles B. Jones (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 4.

¹⁴ Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 2nd ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1986), 432; Murray A. Rubinstein, *The Protestant Community on Modern Taiwan: Mission, Seminary, and Church* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1991), 34. For a history of Baptist work in Taiwan, see Leon H. Chow, “An Evaluation of Southern Baptist Mission Work—A Symposium; From Taiwan,” *Review and Expositor* 62, no. 1 (February 1965): 36–49.

¹⁵ Rubinstein, *The Protestant Community on Modern Taiwan*, 5.

¹⁶ Carl Hunker, “Email to Linda Phillips,” July 22, 2004, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

¹⁷ The Foreign Mission Board is now known as the International Mission Board (IMB). The Southern Baptist Convention voted to change the name in 1997. Hunker’s full name is William Carl Hunker. Hunker’s name appears in Chinese characters and pinyin.

¹⁸ Winston Crawley, “Biographical Sketch: William Carl Hunker,” 1998, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

years to study Mandarin Chinese before returning to the United States for a one-year furlough.¹⁹ While Hunker was on furlough in 1952, he accepted a new role in Taiwan, where the FMB was developing plans to establish the Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary (TBTS) under the leadership of Charles Culpepper Sr.²⁰

Carl and Jeanette Hunker arrived in Taiwan in September of 1952.²¹ Hunker spent the next thirty-four years serving the Baptist churches of Taiwan. He pastored churches, trained leaders, taught seminary courses, and helped establish a Baptist convention in Taiwan known as the Chinese Baptist Convention (CBC).²² However, Taiwan Baptists most know Hunker for the eighteen years he served as the president of TBTS in Taipei. After he finished his tenure as president of TBTS, he continued to travel and teach as a guest lecturer at Baptist seminaries in Malaysia, India, Sri Lanka, and Singapore.²³ He returned to Taiwan for the 1985–1986 school year, when he officially retired from FMB service on his seventieth birthday.²⁴ He eventually settled in Kansas City, Missouri, and helped lead Emmanuel Chinese Baptist Church (ECBC), where he served as pastor and pastor emeritus until he died in 2016.²⁵

¹⁹ Linda Phillips, “Carl and Jeanette Hunker: Beloved Teachers,” 2002, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

²⁰ Phillips, “Carl and Jeanette Hunker: Beloved Teachers.” For more on Charles Culpepper, Sr., see John C. Plumley II, “An Analysis of Charles Culpepper Sr.’s Pneumatology and Its Relevance for Missions Today” (PhD diss., Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016).

²¹ Carl Hunker, “Email to Linda Phillips,” April 2, 2004, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

²² Te-Jen Ke, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 18, 2020. Throughout this dissertation, I cite Chinese names in footnotes and the bibliography according to the American academic system, which places given names prior to surnames. However, in the body of the dissertation, I preserve Chinese etiquette by placing surnames prior to given names.

²³ Crawley, “Biographical Sketch.”

²⁴ Crawley, “Biographical Sketch.”

²⁵ Don Gardner, email interview by author, March 4, 2020.

I chose to research Hunker for many reasons. Jim Graham, International Mission Board (IMB) missionary in Taiwan for seventeen years, was the first person to tell me about Hunker.²⁶ When I moved to Taiwan in 2017, I asked Graham whom he considered to be the most influential missionary in the history of Taiwan Baptists. Without hesitation, Graham told me he considered Hunker to be the most influential missionary in Taiwan Baptist history for two reasons. First, Hunker personally mentored many of the Baptist pastors and convention leaders serving the churches today. Second, Hunker was one of the leaders of Amoy Street Baptist Church (ASBC) in Taipei when it experienced the most fruitful season of church planting.²⁷ Hunker left a legacy that goes back sixty-five years.

I was impressed by what Graham had to say about Hunker, but it was not until I spoke with the current TBTS president, Tsai Rei-Yi, that I decided to research Hunker. Tsai agreed that Hunker was one of the most influential Baptist missionaries to Taiwan Baptists. When I asked Tsai why, he told me that Hunker's strength as a leader, attention to detail, passion for spreading the gospel, commitment to incarnational witness, emphasis on church planting, and care for young leaders allowed him (i.e., Hunker) to build deep relationships with many, including himself (i.e., Tsai).²⁸ Regarding church

²⁶ Jim Graham was the IMB representative at Hunker's memorial service in 2016.

²⁷ For a complete list of churches planted by ASBC, contact the CBC. See also Jim Graham, telephone interview by author, February 27, 2020; Yen-Chen Peng, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 5, 2020.

²⁸ Rei-Yi Tsai, email interview by author, March 1, 2020. This dissertation references many contributors who share the Tsai surname. However, Rei-Yi Tsai is the most referenced contributor of the group. Thus, when referring to Rei-Yi Tsai in a short footnote, I simply refer to him as Tsai, and I refer to all other contributors who share the Tsai surname with their full name. Further, I interviewed Tsai on two occasions; thus, I include the date each time I reference Tsai.

planting, Tsai believes Hunker played a part in starting twenty-five percent of all CBC churches in Taiwan.²⁹

When I told Tsai I was considering writing my dissertation on Hunker, he became excited, leaned towards me, and said that if I wrote on Hunker, he would introduce me to many of Hunker's disciples.³⁰ Tsai kept his word; he prepared a list of potential interviewees and wrote each person, introducing me and the scope of my research.³¹

Another reason I decided to write on Hunker is his focus on indigenous leadership development. Hunker developed leaders throughout his tenure. Each time Hunker left a position, he intentionally transitioned leadership responsibilities to indigenous leadership. For example, in 1954, Hunker helped establish the CBC and served as vice-chairman for three years while he prepared a national leader to take his place on the committee.³² Moreover, Hunker extended his tenure as TBTS President three years longer than he hoped so that he could adequately equip a national leader to serve as the first indigenous seminary president.³³

Hunker also emphasized the importance of church planting and pastoral development. In 2017, the CBC set a goal to plant one-hundred churches by 2027.³⁴ In the words of Tsai, the churches of Taiwan “need to return to the spirit of Dr. Hunker” if

²⁹ Tsai, interview, March 1, 2020. This statistic is impossible to prove or disprove. It is plausible, though, due to Hunker's influence at the seminary and on-going relationship with seminary graduates who relied on Hunker's mentoring and counsel throughout their professional lives.

³⁰ Tsai made this promise on February 14, 2019.

³¹ See appendix 1 for the complete list of interviewees.

³² Hunker, “Email to Linda Phillips,” April 2, 2004.

³³ See Crawley, “Biographical Sketch”; Faye Pearson, *Taiwan Connections: Fond Memories* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2009), 52.

³⁴ For more on the Church Planting 100 Initiative, contact the CBC

they are going to meet their church planting goal.³⁵ It was during Hunker's tenure that Taiwan Baptists experienced the most significant church planting growth in their short history.³⁶ Hunker saw the need for new church plants, and he devoted himself to raising and developing indigenous church leaders who would plant, pastor, and lead new churches. Yen Tzu-Nien, the current executive director of the CBC, says,

I personally feel like this is a key moment for foreign missionaries and local church leaders to cooperate with one another. [Cooperation between missionaries and church leaders] is a model that we learned from Dr. Hunker . . . , that we should work together, not you lead or I lead. That is not important. It is not important who leads, but what is important is that we cooperate and work together to accomplish our mission. When the foreign mentality and the local mentality can fuse together for mission sake, we will have a very great advantage in terms of the gospel and evangelism, and this is most easily seen by the example set by Dr. Hunker.³⁷

Hunker's model for church planting will help the CBC and IMB work together to plant more indigenous churches.

Finally, as a missionary to the Taiwanese, I wanted to learn from Hunker. I regularly heard older missionaries and pastors mention his name, and I was impressed that they still held in high regard a missionary who served so long ago. National leaders tell stories about on how poor Hunker's Mandarin was, but they all agree that he cared for them unlike any other.³⁸ They trusted him and allowed him to influence their lives. His FMB/IMB contemporaries did, too, including former FMB/IMB president Jerry Rankin, who says of Hunker, "I do not know that I've ever known anyone just so genuinely humble and Christ-like."³⁹

³⁵ Graham, interview.

³⁶ "CBC Church Planting Tree," Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

³⁷ Tzu-Nien Yen, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020.

³⁸ I base this observation on my personal interaction with Taiwan Baptist pastors and leaders.

³⁹ Jerry Rankin, telephone interview by author, February 28, 2020.

I was also impressed by the legacy of Hunker’s work, and I wanted to study the life and ministry of a missionary whose work is still standing sixty-five years later. Further, Hunker’s commitment to scholarship (he completed his Th.D. from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary [SBTS] and served as TBTS president for eighteen years), missions (he served with the FMB for forty years), and the local church (he served as pastor to many Taiwan Baptist churches) resonated with me, and I wanted to learn how each of those three commitments factored into his overall influence on Taiwan Baptists.

Research Question

Many missionaries have served Taiwan Baptists throughout their seventy-year history, but Hunker’s name stands out among Baptist leaders today.⁴⁰ I wanted to ask why. My primary research question was, “What made Hunker an influential leader in the history of Taiwan Baptists?” Thus, my thesis is the following: Hunker was an influential leader in the history of Taiwan Baptists because of his genuine care for the people, passion for the lost, understanding of the culture, and commitment to indigeneity.⁴¹

Methodology

I conducted research in three ways. First, I gathered all of Hunker’s primary sources. Second, I gathered a large number of secondary sources that served to explain Hunker’s context and influence. Third, I conducted qualitative interviews.

⁴⁰ August 25, 2019, marked the seventieth anniversary of the first Baptist church in Taiwan, which was Renai Baptist Church.

⁴¹ In an earlier stage of my research, I argued that Hunker’s longevity was one of the four primary factors for his influence on Taiwan Baptists. However, after further research, I have concluded that his longevity in Taiwan equally reinforced each of the four factors that led to his influence on Taiwan Baptist history. Tsai affirmed my thesis on February 26, 2020, agreeing that the four criteria I selected would enable me to best understand Hunker’s influence on Taiwan Baptists.

Primary Sources

Hunker did not write extensively. Outside of his Th.D. dissertation on William Carey, Hunker's only other significant work was a book he wrote in 1970 called *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution*, two magazine articles, and a small booklet for new believers.⁴²

Further, I collected all archival information on Hunker from SBTS, TBTS, the IMB, and the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives (SBHLA). Included in the archival resources were personal writings, written correspondence between Hunker and FMB leadership, and audio recordings. For example, TBTS archives provided a three-hour recording of Hunker's recollection of the development of the CBC and TBTS. In addition to this recording, SBHLA provided five recordings that cover a plethora of topics, ranging from Hunker's biography to his views on mission strategy.

Secondary Sources

I gathered a large number of secondary sources.⁴³ For example, I studied resources that will help readers understand the cultural and religious context of Taiwan.⁴⁴ Further, I have reviewed resources Hunker's contemporaries wrote that will help readers understand his influence on Taiwanese Baptist leaders and missionaries.⁴⁵

Qualitative Interviews

I conducted qualitative interviews. John Creswell and Cheryl Poth define qualitative research as "an inquiry process of understanding based on a distinct methodological approach to inquiry that explores a social or human problem. The

⁴² Hunker, *Taiwan*; Hunker, *Lessons for New Christians* (Hong Kong: Baptist Press, 1953).

⁴³ See bibliography for a complete list of secondary sources.

⁴⁴ See, e.g., Joseph A. Adler, *Chinese Religious Traditions* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002); Rubinstein, *The Protestant Community on Modern Taiwan*.

⁴⁵ See Herbert Ward Barker, *Patiently Run the Race: And Don't Forget to Laugh along the Way* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2009); Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*; Linda Phillips, *Reflections of the Glory of God: Biographical Sketches of Taiwan Baptists Co-Workers* (Taipei: Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002).

research builds a complex, holistic picture; analyzes words; reports detailed views of participants; and conducts the study in a natural setting.”⁴⁶ In addition, they explain,

Qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretive/ theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analyses that is both inductive and deductive and establishes patterns or themes.⁴⁷

Carol McKinney simplifies Creswell and Poth’s definition, stating, “Research refers to systematically collecting data and analyzing it.”⁴⁸ Herbert and Irene Rubin explain the role of interviewing in light of qualitative research:

Qualitative researchers focus on depth rather than breadth; they care less about finding averages and more about understanding specific situations, individuals, groups, or moments in time that are important or revealing. . . . When using *in-depth qualitative interviewing*, . . . researchers talk to those who have knowledge of or experience with the problem of interest. Through such interviews, researchers explore in detail the experiences, motives, and opinions of others and learn to see the world from perspectives other than their own.⁴⁹

Moreover, James Spradley identifies two elements of an interview: developing rapport and eliciting information.⁵⁰ Qualitative interviewing allows the researcher to probe and explore cultures, or some problem, with purpose and integrity. In this case, qualitative interviewing allowed me to probe into Hunker’s life by hearing from those who knew him best.

⁴⁶ John Creswell and Cheryl Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018), 326.

⁴⁷ Creswell and Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 8.

⁴⁸ Carol V. McKinney, *Globe-Trotting in Sandals: A Field Guide to Cultural Research* (Dallas: SIL International, 2000), 2.

⁴⁹ Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012), 2–3 (emphasis original).

⁵⁰ James Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2016), 78 (original emphasis removed).

Creswell and Poth argue that there are five different forms of qualitative inquiry: narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies.⁵¹ I conducted my interviews using the narrative research method. In their words, “Narrative research has many forms, uses a variety of analytic practices, and is rooted in different social and humanities disciplines. . . . As a method, it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals.”⁵² In simpler terms, narrative research explores the life of an individual.⁵³ The researcher typically collects stories about the life of an individual and organizes those stories into a chronological sequence. Narratives can include the following types of research projects: biographical study, autoethnography, life history, or oral history.⁵⁴

In total, I interviewed thirty-four people by conducting thirty-two interviews. Of the interviews, ten were Hunker’s FMB/IMB colleagues, twenty-one were Hunker’s direct disciples, one is the current executive director of the CBC, who speaks to Hunker’s lasting impact on today’s work, and two were Hunker’s children.⁵⁵ I trained and used two local translators.⁵⁶ I transcribed the interviews after completion.

I conducted interviews in various ways. Rubin and Rubin name four types of interviews: focus groups, internet interviews, casual conversations and in-passing clarifications, and semistructured and unstructured interviews. They explain that each of these types of interviews “differ from each other in the role of the interviewer, the

⁵¹ Creswell and Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 2.

⁵² Creswell and Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 67.

⁵³ Creswell and Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 67.

⁵⁴ Creswell and Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 70–71.

⁵⁵ I interviewed Rei-Yi Tsai on two occasions.

⁵⁶ Interviews were in either English or Mandarin Chinese. I used two different translators for interviews conducted in Mandarin Chinese. The two translators were Ken Chen and Vivian Wu. Chen completed a master’s degree from Michigan State University. Wu also holds a graduate degree from an American university. Both translators understand the importance of accuracy in academic writing.

number of people interviewed at the same time, whether the interviews are conducted face to face or at a distance, the extent to which they are planned, and how well acquainted the interviewer and interviewee are with one another.”⁵⁷

Focus group interviews bring a group of people together who are representatives of the group under study. The interviewer then acts as the group facilitator. Focus groups allow the researcher to hear multiple perspectives at the same time and observe how one idea is received by other members of the group. I used the focus group format twice to allow the interviewees to interact with one another and recount their experiences.⁵⁸

Internet interviews are helpful when communicating with someone who is far away, hard to reach, or wishes to remain private.⁵⁹ Internet interviews include email. Sending written questions gives “the interviewees more time to think about the answers, and also [allows] them to hide their emotional responses.”⁶⁰ I used the internet interview format for thirteen interviews.

Casual or in-passing clarification interviews fill in gaps along the way and are not long, structured interviews. According to Rubin and Rubin, “During these usually brief, completely unstructured and open-ended, spur-of-the-moment chats, the conversation sometimes moves into a topic relevant to the research.”⁶¹ Conversations like these work best after the interviewer and interviewee have had time to build rapport and are comfortable speaking causally with one another. I did not use the casual-clarification format.

⁵⁷ Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 29.

⁵⁸ I used the focus group format with Hunker’s children, David Hunker and Joyce Lynn Maslin, and with Tzu-Nien Yen, Ching-Tao Ho, and Hsiu-Mei Chang.

⁵⁹ Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 30.

⁶⁰ Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 30.

⁶¹ Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 30.

Semistructured and unstructured interviews follow a typical interview style. Rubin and Rubin write, “Both the semistructured and the unstructured interviews take place as a scheduled, usually extended conversation between researcher and interviewee.”⁶² The two interview styles differ in format.

The researcher explores a specific topic in the semistructured interview. The authors write, “In the *semistructured interview*, the researcher has a specific topic to learn about, prepares a limited number of questions in advance, and plans to ask follow-up questions.”⁶³ The purpose of the semistructured interview is to provide enough structure to stay on topic while allowing the interviewee to share freely.

However, in an unstructured interview, the researcher prepares fewer questions and relies less on planned items. As Rubin and Rubin explain, “In the *unstructured interview*, the researcher has a general topic in mind, but many of the specific questions are formulated as the interview proceeds, in response to what the interviewee says.”⁶⁴ The purpose of the unstructured interview is to allow the interview to go where the conversation leads.

The authors continue, “Their primary difference [between the semistructured and unstructured interviews] lies in the degree of control that the interviewer maintains over the interview; in semistructured interviews, the researcher tries to focus more narrowly on the planned items that speak to the research question.”⁶⁵ I used the semistructured interviewing method for seventeen interviews.

⁶² Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 31.

⁶³ Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 31 (emphasis original).

⁶⁴ Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 31 (emphasis original).

⁶⁵ Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 31.

Interviewees

I conducted interviews in an office environment with minimal noise distractions. I recorded the interviews with the permission of the interviewee and stored those recordings on my password-protected computer. The SBTS Ethics Committee deemed the interviews “low risk,” so they required only a verbal statement of informed consent. Per the “SBTS Risk Assessment and Informed Consent Guide,” I explained to the interviewee both my purpose for the research and how I would use the information gained from the interview. Further, I informed the interviewee that the interview was voluntary and that he or she could withdraw from the interview at any time. In this section, I introduce each interviewee.

Burris, Robert

Robert Burris is a retired FMB/IMB missionary. He served in Taiwan from 1984 to 2004. He was reappointed in 2012 and served until 2015. He was a church planter in Kaohsiung, which is the second largest city in southern Taiwan.

Chang, Chen-Kuang (張真光)

Chang Chen-Kuang was the third president of TBTS, succeeding Hunker. He first met Hunker in Shanghai, China, at a summer camp in 1946. He enrolled in the seminary in 1958, completed his Asia Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary degree in 1962, completed his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1981, and was appointed TBTS president in 1981. He served as seminary president from 1981 to 1995.

Chang, Chih-Hsin (張之信)

Chang Chih-Hsin was a member of the first TBTS graduating class in 1955 and the first person to be ordained as a Baptist pastor in Taiwan. While in seminary, he was an associate pastor to Hunker at Amoy Street Baptist Church (ASBC). After

graduating, Chang served as the senior pastor of Tainan Baptist Church. He joined the TBTS faculty in 1967.

Chang, Chuan-Lin (張傳琳)

Chang Chuan-Lin met Hunker in 1974 when she enrolled at TBTS. She interned at ASBC in 1978. After graduating, she ministered at Grace Baptist Church in Taipei.

Chang, Hsiu-Mei (張秀梅)

Chang Hsiu-Mei is the wife of pastor Ho Ching-Tao (see below). Hunker conducted their marriage ceremony. She enrolled at TBTS while she was pregnant in 1977. Hunker drove her to the hospital when she went into labor.

Chen, Shou-Sui (陳壽穗)

Chen Shou-Sui is a former professor at TBTS. He first met Hunker in 1979 at a conference where Hunker was the keynote speaker. At the conference, Chen surrendered his life to ministry.

Chou, Chien-Chung (周建中)

Chou Chien-Chung was the third pastor of ASBC, succeeding Hunker. He was ordained on May 7, 1961, and served ASBC for sixteen years. He was the first person ordained for pastoral ministry by ASBC.

Chuang, Huai-Su (莊懷駟)

Chuang Huai-Su first met Hunker in 1970 as a high school student in Taichung. He enrolled in TBTS in 1980 at the age of twenty-seven. He graduated from TBTS in 1984. He wrote his master's thesis on the history of discipleship training in the Baptist church in Taiwan between the years 1948 and 1980. He is the current pastor of Our Baptist Church in Taoyuan, Taiwan.

Chung, Chin-Kuei (鍾金貴)

Chung Chin-Kuei is pastor of En Guang Banqiao Baptist Church. He first met Hunker as a child in 1958. Hunker encouraged him to attend seminary on three different occasions before he surrendered his life to ministry. He enrolled in TBTS in 1986.

Cook, Glenda

Glenda Cook is currently serving in Taiwan as an IMB missionary. She met Hunker in 1985 when she first arrived in Taiwan. She spent one year in Taipei before relocating to Taichung, where she has served for the past thirty-seven years.

Gardner, Don

Don Gardner is a retired FMB/IMB missionary. He first met Hunker in 1981 when he moved to Taipei. He started ECBC in 1984 and reconnected with Hunker in 1986 when Hunker relocated to Kansas City in retirement.

Graham, Jim

Jim Graham is an IMB missionary. He served in Taipei for seventeen years, starting in 2003. He first met Hunker in 2014. Graham represented the IMB at Hunker's memorial service at TBTS in 2016.

Ho, Ching-Tao (何清道)

Ho Ching-Tao is a TBTS alumnus and pastor. He enrolled in TBTS in 1974 at the age of twenty-six. He considers Hunker a life-long mentor.

Hogue, LeRoy

LeRoy Hogue is a retired FMB/IMB missionary and TBTS professor. He met Hunker in 1966 when he first moved to Taiwan and lived next to him on the seminary campus, starting in 1972. Hogue taught church history and Baptist history at TBTS. He retired in 1998.

Hunker, David

David Hunker is Carl Hunker's son. David was one year old when the Hunkers moved to Suzhou, China in 1946. He left Taiwan in 1962 to attend college.

Kao, Ping-Feng (高平豐)

Kao Ping-Feng is a TBTS alumnus, former chairman of the CBC, and pastor of a Taiwanese church. He first met Hunker when he enrolled in seminary. Kao considers Hunker a life-long mentor.

Ke, Te-Jen (柯德仁)

Ke Te-Jen is a lay leader at ASBC, former trustee of TBTS, and retired chaplain of Chung Yuan Christian University. He was baptized by Hunker at ASBC in 1954. He assisted Hunker during the 150th anniversary of Baptist work in China celebration, held in 1986.

Li, Ai-Hua (栗愛華)

Li Ai-Hua was the former director of Taiwan's Woman's Missionary Union. She met Hunker in 1959 while she volunteered in the TBTS library. She enrolled as a student in 1961 and graduated in 1965.

Li, Chien-Hu (李乾虎)

Li Chien-Hu is a TBTS graduate. He enrolled in TBTS in 1973, graduated in 1977, and served the same church for forty years. Li considers Hunker a life-long mentor.

Lin, Duan

Lin Duan is a former student and mentee of Hunker. He first met Hunker in 1972. He is currently the chairman of the deacons at ASBC.

Maslin, Joyce Lynn

Joyce Lynn Maslin is Carl Hunker's daughter. She was born in Suzhou, China, in 1948. She left Taiwan in 1966 to attend college.

Nien, Bih-Feng (粘碧鳳)

Nien Bih-Feng is the current CBC president. She enrolled in TBTS in 1983. Nien met Hunker in 1985 when he returned to TBTS to teach for one year before his retirement.

Peng, Yen-Chen (彭彥禎)

Peng Yen-Chen is the current pastor of ASBC. He first met Hunker at ASBC's 50th anniversary. Hunker counseled Peng and advised him on both church-related and personal matters.

Phillips, Linda

Linda Phillips is a retired FMB/IMB missionary. She served as TBTS librarian at the end of Hunker's TBTS presidency. Phillips served in Taiwan from 1976 to 2008.

Rankin, Jerry

Jerry Rankin is a retired FMB/IMB missionary and president. He worked with Hunker from 1984 to 1985 while Hunker provided theological education in Malaysia, India, and Singapore. Rankin was the associate area director for Southeast Asia at the time. He was appointed FMB president in 1993.

Tsai, Ling-Min (蔡鈴敏)

Tsai Ling-Min is a former secretary general of the CBC. He enrolled in TBTS in 1975. Hunker supervised Tsai's master's thesis on church administration and the spiritual lives of church ministers.

Tsai, Rei Yi (蔡瑞益)

Tsai Rei-Yi is the current president of TBTS. He first met Hunker at the age of twenty-four in 1975 when he enrolled in TBTS as a student. He joined the TBTS faculty in 1980, served as interim president from 1995 to 1997, and was appointed TBTS president in 1997.

Tseng, Ching-En (曾敬恩)

Tseng Ching-En is a former vice-president of TBTS and executive director of the CBC. He first met Hunker in 1972 when he enrolled in the seminary. He served as a cross-cultural missionary to Korea from 1975 to 1979. He joined the TBTS faculty in 1980 and was the dean of student life from 1982 to 1986. He served as executive director of the CBC from 2007 to 2016.

Wang, Chi (王琪)

Wang Chi is a former professor at TBTS. She enrolled in TBTS in 1967, graduated in 1970, completed her graduate degree in 1975, and directed the TBTS registrar from 1975 to 1983. She joined the TBTS faculty in 1983 and worked closely with Hunker until his retirement.

Weber, Debbie

Debbie Weber is an emeritus FMB/IMB missionary and was a TBTS professor of church music. She first met Hunker in 1981 when she arrived in Taiwan. During her fifteen-year tenure at TBTS, she saw the full-time teaching faculty go from half Chinese and half missionary to fully Chinese.

West, Ron

Ron West is a retired FMB/IMB missionary. He first met Hunker in 1979 at a missions meeting. He recalls how Hunker warmly welcomed him upon arriving in Taiwan.

Winstead, Ron

Ron Winstead is a retired FMB missionary and TBTS professor. He first met Hunker at a prayer retreat soon after arriving in Taiwan in 1972. He moved to the TBTS campus in 1975 and worked closely with Hunker until Hunker's retirement in 1986. In retirement, Hunker stayed in Winstead's home when he visited Taiwan.

Xue, Ming-Guang (薛銘光)

Xue Ming-Guang is a former TBTS chairman of the board. He graduated from TBTS in 1975 and pastored Jingmei Baptist Church. He considers Hunker a life-long mentor.

Yen, Tzu-Nien (晏子年)

Yen Tzu-Nien is the current executive director of the CBC. His wife was a student at TBTS from 1979 to 1982 while Hunker was president. Yen attended TBTS after Hunker's retirement.

Summary of Research

Carl Hunker passed away in 2016. My dissertation is the first academic research project researching Hunker's life and ministry. However, two books include a chapter on Hunker and his family.⁶⁶ The purpose of these two books is to provide a general description of Baptist missionaries to Taiwan. Neither of them seeks to answer to the depth I am pursuing why Hunker was influential in the history of Taiwan Baptists.

Significance

Hunker's understanding of the Chinese culture allowed him to build strong relationships with young Baptist leaders, a feat not every missionary accomplishes. By identifying Hunker's ability to gain and hold profound influence in the lives of his

⁶⁶ See Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 39–55; Phillips, *Reflections of the Glory of God*, 85–88.

disciples, I am better prepared to serve Taiwan Baptist churches today. Furthermore, by evaluating heroes of the past and identifying the principles in their life and ministry, contemporary missionaries will be better equipped to minister cross-culturally.

Chapter Summaries

Hunker was an influential leader in the history of Taiwan Baptists primarily due to his genuine care for the people, passion for the lost, understanding of the culture, and commitment to indigeneity. I develop my thesis in seven chapters.

In this chapter, I introduce Hunker and explain my research question and thesis. Chapter 2 demonstrates Hunker's significance in the life and history of Taiwan Baptists by familiarizing readers with the background information to understand his influence. By providing a short biographical survey of Hunker's life before, during, and after his tenure in Taiwan, I demonstrate Hunker's impact on his students, the churches, the CBC, and the seminary.

Chapters 3–6 explain the four primary factors for Hunker's influence. Chapter 3 argues that Hunker was profoundly influential in the history of Taiwan Baptists due to his genuine care for the people. To argue that point, I demonstrate the focus of his care, the expression of his care, the connection between his character and his care, and the influence of his care on his disciples.

Chapter 4 demonstrates how Hunker's passion for the lost influenced those he discipled. By asking the question, "How did Hunker demonstrate a passion for the lost?" I was able to research Hunker's passion for people, Taiwan, Mainland China, the Chinese diaspora, and contextualization. By demonstrating Hunker's passion for reaching the lost, I explain how he cultivated that same passion in others.

Chapter 5 demonstrates Hunker's influence based on his understanding of the local culture. The purpose of the chapter is to show (1) how Hunker's understanding of *Chinese history* allowed him to understand the cultural worldview of the people, (2) how

Hunker's understanding of *cultural values* allowed him to foster strong relationships with students and young leaders, (3) how Hunker's understanding of the *mainline religions* helped him minister in Taiwan, and (4) how Hunker's understanding of *local folk religion* helped him disciple a generation of Baptist ministers.

Chapter 6 demonstrates how Hunker influenced the life of Taiwan Baptists through his commitment to indigeneity. First, I show Hunker's commitment to local church indigeneity by demonstrating how he developed local leaders, emphasized contextualization to reflect the local culture, and evaluated the health of a church based on the three-self principles of indigenization. Second, I show Hunker's commitment to convention (i.e., CBC) indigeneity by demonstrating how he helped establish the convention, guided it towards a missional identity, and mentored young convention leaders. Third, I show Hunker's commitment to seminary (i.e., TBTS) indigeneity by demonstrating how he cultivated an indigenous faculty, developed an indigenous curriculum, and empowered an indigenous president to lead the seminary forward.

Chapter 7 serves as the conclusion of the dissertation. I summarize my main points and make application for missionaries today based on the principles I gleaned from Hunker's ministry in Taiwan. I conclude by arguing that all missionaries, regardless of their context, can learn from Hunker's example.

Delimitations

In terms of delimitation, this study does not attempt to examine the entirety of Hunker's life and ministry. I narrow my scope to his time in Taiwan. I provide information pertaining to his ministry before or after his service in Taiwan only when it contributes to understanding why he was influential in the life of Taiwan Baptists.

Nor do I seek to examine every element of Hunker's ministry in Taiwan. The purpose of my research is to understand Hunker's influence on the history of Taiwan Baptists, not to evaluate every specific strategy Hunker developed and employed.

Further, I do not attempt to examine the entirety of Baptist mission strategy in Taiwan or provide a full history of TBTS or the CBC.

Conclusion

God used Hunker to influence the life and history of Taiwan Baptists. At the time the FMB appointed Hunker in 1946, he never considered serving in Taiwan, for FMB missions in Taiwan had not yet begun. But God used Hunker's experience in and expulsion from Suzhou, China to prepare him to serve in Taiwan for thirty-four years. A short biographical survey of Hunker's life before, during, and after his tenure in Taiwan is traced in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

HUNKER'S SIGNIFICANCE

On the inside cover of Carl Hunker's favorite devotional book, *Imitation of Christ*, he wrote the following prayer: "Lord, I give up all my life and purposes, all my goals and ambitions. Work out thy whole will in my whole life. Send me wherever you want to send me."¹ Hunker wrote this prayer in 1991 after returning from a short trip to Taiwan. He had been retired for five years. Thus, even at the age of seventy-five years, Hunker remained ready to serve Christ's cause among the nations. He also wrote, "If I had 100 years to give to the Lord, I would give them all to missions."² What he demonstrated in retirement he modeled throughout his entire missionary career, which resulted in profound influence in the life and history of Taiwan Baptists.

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate Hunker's significance in the life and history of Taiwan Baptists by familiarizing readers with background information to understand why Hunker was influential. By providing a short biographical survey of Hunker's life before, during, and after his tenure in Taiwan, I demonstrate Hunker's impact on his students, the churches, the Chinese Baptist Convention (CBC), and Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary (TBTS).

¹ Joyce Lynn Maslin, email interview by author, February 26, 2020. Hunker wrote this prayer on July 23, 1991.

² Maslin, interview.

Life before Taiwan

Hunker was born on April 24, 1916, in Lakeview, Oregon, to Harry and Louise Hunker.³ When he was two years old, his family moved to Marshall, Missouri.⁴ After his mother developed tuberculosis, the family moved to Canon City, Colorado, to be in a dryer climate.⁵ He graduated from Canon City High school in 1934.⁶

Salvation and Ministry Calling

Hunker grew up in a Christian home. He trusted Christ on April 20, 1927, at the age of eleven, and he received baptism one week later, on April 27, at First Baptist Church Canon City.⁷ He sensed God's calling into ministry at the age of fourteen.⁸ However, neither he nor his parents had the financial means to send him to college.⁹ Hunker's former librarian at TBTS and former Foreign Mission Board (FMB) missionary, Linda Phillips, writes, "His family was poor, and there was no financial provision for him to attend college, so after high school, in 1934, he worked in the Civilian Conservation Corps, a government environmental program, and saved money for his education."¹⁰

Hunker attended William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri, from 1936 to 1940.¹¹ He recalled that of the 450 first-year students at William Jewell, a quarter of them

³ Cal Hunker, "FMB Missionary Application," 1945, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁴ Faye Pearson, *Taiwan Connections: Fond Memories* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2009), 40.

⁵ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 40.

⁶ "FMB Preliminary Information Blank," February 5, 1945, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁷ Carl Hunker, "Oral History," Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

⁸ Hunker, "Oral History."

⁹ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 42.

¹⁰ See Linda Phillips, *Reflections of the Glory of God: Biographical Sketches of Taiwan Baptists Co-Workers* (Taipei: Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002), 86; Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 42.

¹¹ "FMB Preliminary Information Blank."

were preparing for missions.¹² At this point in Hunker's life, though, he sensed God's calling into pastoral leadership, not missions.

Pastoral Experience

Hunker worked part-time during his first two years in college sweeping the library floors. God called him to his first pastorate during his sophomore year. In an autobiographical recording, Hunker stated, "At that time, I was young and had little experience, but I felt happy to do this work."¹³ Hunker served the church part-time for the next two years.

After graduating from William Jewell College, Hunker enrolled at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1940.¹⁴ That same year, First Baptist Church Canon City ordained Hunker.¹⁵ He pastored a few more rural churches part-time while he was in Louisville.¹⁶ God used these experiences to prepare him for the mission field.

Attending SBTS was an important decision in Hunker's life and ministry. While at William Jewell, he had been a member of a Northern Baptist Convention (NBC) church. Former International Mission Board (IMB) missionary and Taiwan missionary historian Faye Pearson writes,

This [decision] was a major decision for him, as his background in Colorado was with the Northern Baptist Convention. He had also been a member of the Wolcott Baptist Church in Kansas, a Northern Baptist Convention church, during his college

¹² Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 43.

¹³ Hunker, "Oral History."

¹⁴ In 1963, William Jewell College awarded Hunker an honorary Doctor of Divinity. See W. Carl Hunker, *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1970), 123.

¹⁵ "Operation Baptist Biography Data Form for Living Person," March 29, 1963, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹⁶ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 45.

days. Carl liked the evangelism and missions emphasis of the Southern Baptist Convention churches.¹⁷

Hunker knew that attending a Southern Baptist seminary would mean a departure from the NBC. While Hunker liked the missions emphases of the Southern Baptists, it was their emphasis on evangelism, as well as the influence of the church he grew up in, that persuaded him to become a Southern Baptist again. After enrolling at SBTS, he began working on his Bachelor of Divinity (B.D.) degree.

Missions Calling and Dissertation

Hunker completed his B.D. in 1943 and began work on his Master of Theology (Th.M.) degree in 1943. Hunker's call to foreign missions began while he was completing his Th.M., but he did not fully surrender to foreign missions until he began working on his Doctor of Theology (Th.D.) degree in missions. He explained that while he was a Th.M. student, many seminary students left school to serve in the military during World War II.¹⁸ At the same time, many missionaries serving in China returned home. As a residential student on SBTS's campus in Louisville, Hunker interacted with some of the returning missionaries from China. He recalled, "They explained how much China [needed] the gospel, so I was more and more moved in [those] three years."¹⁹ In addition, Pearson writes, "Some students left the seminary and entered the war as chaplains. Carl began to feel that one way to bring world peace was to share the gospel with the nations of the world."²⁰

However, Hunker doubted he had the qualifications to minister in China or anywhere else overseas. He decided to stay at SBTS and pursue his Th.D. in missions.

¹⁷ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 43.

¹⁸ Hunker, "Oral History."

¹⁹ Hunker, "Oral History."

²⁰ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 45.

Hunker's primary purpose for pursuing his doctorate was to discern God's calling on his life.²¹

Hunker married Jeanette Roebuck the same year he began his doctoral work.²² Jeanette sensed God's leading into foreign missions from a young age, but she was hesitant to share this calling with her husband.²³ God confirmed Hunker's call to foreign missions in November of 1944.²⁴ Pearson records Hunker's call and surrender to missions as follows:

One night, as he tried to prepare his teaching plans to teach the next day, he was unable to prepare the material. He wanted to know God's will for himself and his family in life service. Finally, he put his books aside and began writing on a small piece of notepaper all the reasons he ought to give his total life to missions. On the reverse side of the notepaper, he listed the reasons he should serve at home. Carl said, "As I looked at both sides of the notepaper, it became obvious that reasons on one side were basically selfish and sinful. The reasons on the other side were the spirit of Jesus, who came and gave His life for my salvation and all humanity. Leaning my head on my books, I prayed and verbally committed my life to foreign missions. A great peace flowed over my entire being."²⁵

At that moment, Hunker surrendered his life to missions.

Much like Jeanette, Hunker was also hesitant to share this calling with his wife of two years. Foreign missionaries were required to sacrifice greatly, especially in the late 1940s after the World War II. He was concerned for how Jeanette would respond. However, she quickly affirmed their call to missions, and they applied with the FMB during Hunker's third year as a doctoral student.²⁶

²¹ Hunker, "Oral History."

²² The Hunkers were married on October 2, 1943. See Hunker, "FMB Missionary Application."

²³ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 46.

²⁴ Hunker, "FMB Missionary Application."

²⁵ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 46.

²⁶ Hunker, "FMB Missionary Application."

Hunker completed his Th.D. dissertation on William Carey in 1946. He first considered writing on Carey while he was teaching a class on missions as a doctoral student at the seminary. While Hunker was giving a lecture on Carey as the “Father of Modern Missions,” a student asked him, “Do we not claim this honor for a Baptist because of our Baptist bias?”²⁷ Hunker explained that the student’s question created in him a curiosity concerning the life of Carey that prompted him to know more. After careful consideration, Hunker decided to write his dissertation on the life and ministry of Carey in India, concluding that while many made significant contributions to the development of missions strategy, to Carey—more than any other—belongs the title of “Father of Modern Missions” due to the lasting impact his principles had on missionary societies and the mission field.²⁸

Hunker divided his dissertation into two sections: Carey’s influence on missionary societies and the mission field. In the latter section, Hunker identified principles he discovered in the life and ministry of Carey and examined the impact those principles had on subsequent missionary methodologies. Hunker identified one of those principles as the “concentration-and-diffusion” principle.²⁹ According to Hunker, Carey developed, trained, and dispatched leaders from the city of Serampore to wider areas.³⁰ He wrote, “Concentration is evident through a manifest confinement of his effort to a limited area in India. During his forty years there, he remained almost exclusively in one

²⁷ Carl Hunker, “The Influence of William Carey on the Principles of Subsequent Missions” (ThD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1946), v.

²⁸ Hunker, “The Influence of William Carey,” 210.

²⁹ Hunker, “The Influence of William Carey,” 140.

³⁰ For more on Carey’s philosophy of concentration-and-diffusion, see Joe L. Coker, “Developing a Theory of Missions in Serampore: The Increased Emphasis on education as a ‘Means for the Conversion of the Heathens,’” *Mission Studies* 18, no. 1 (2001): 49.

particular area, that of Serampore and Calcutta. . . . Careful and patient instruction of converted natives made possible the phenomenal expansion of his mission program.”³¹

Hunker was right; Carey’s principles did have a significant impact on subsequent missionaries, including Hunker. Carey’s concentration-and-diffusion principle shaped Hunker’s philosophy of missions, but with one significant difference: Carey established sub-missions, while Hunker intentionally planted autonomous churches (more specifically, three-self churches, which I discuss further in chapter 6).³²

The Hunkers applied for FMB missionary service on December 18, 1945.³³ The FMB accepted them as career missionaries on February 19, 1946, and appointed them as missionaries to China on April 9, 1946.³⁴ Carl Hunker was excited about the prospect of serving in China due to its strategic geographical location and large population, which was a quarter of the world’s population.³⁵

The Hunkers departed for China on December 15, 1946, from San Francisco. They arrived in Shanghai, China, two weeks later on December 31.³⁶ They traveled on a former Navy military ship, carrying 950 passengers, of which 675 were missionaries of various entities.³⁷ They quickly passed through Shanghai en route to their final destination of Suzhou, China, in Jiangsu Province.³⁸

³¹ Hunker, “The Influence of William Carey,” 141–42.

³² Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 50.

³³ “Carl Hunker Service Record,” 1998, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

³⁴ “Letter from the FMB Missionary Personnel Committee,” February 19, 1946, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA; “Carl Hunker Service Record.” The Hunkers were also interested in Japan and Russia due to the countries’ importance in world history; however, the FMB initially encouraged them to consider Yugoslavia. See J. W. Marshall, “Letter to Carl Hunker,” March 13, 1946, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

³⁵ Hunker, “Oral History.”

³⁶ Hunker, “Oral History.”

³⁷ See Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 47; Hunker, “Oral History.”

³⁸ Hunker, “Oral History.”

First Term in Suzhou and Baguio

After arriving in Suzhou, Hunker began studying the Suzhou Wu dialect and teaching at Yates Academy, a middle school for boys. After two years of study, Hunker was able to preach his first sermon in the Wu dialect. He enjoyed his time in Suzhou and learned much about Chinese culture. The Hunker family grew while they were there, as well. The Hunkers had one child, David, before they departed the States for China. Their second child, Joyce Lynn, was born on May 3, 1948, in Suzhou.

In December 1948, after only two years in Suzhou, the Hunkers relocated to Baguio, Philippines, due to the Communist army in Northern China progressing southward. Hunker was just beginning to preach in the Suzhou Wu dialect when the FMB evacuated missionary families from northern China.³⁹ The Hunkers had three days to pack their belongings, leaving most of their possessions behind. Most missionaries believed that the war would be over within three to six months, at which time they could return safely.⁴⁰ Yet the Hunkers never did.

Leaving China was chaotic, especially with two young children. Phillips writes, “As they left, students and other friends came to see them off. The Hunkers had a hard time getting on the departing train due to the many people leaving the city at the same time. After Carl and Jeanette boarded the train, the students passed [Joyce Lynn, their daughter,] hand overhead into the arms of the waiting parents.”⁴¹ David was already with them on the train.

The Hunkers first traveled to the Philippines’ capital, Manila, before arriving in Baguio. After arriving in Baguio and processing the move he and his family just made, Hunker was greatly discouraged. He left behind many friends in Suzhou, and the

³⁹ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 48. Families with young children, such as the Hunkers, were the first to be relocated.

⁴⁰ Hunker, “Oral History.”

⁴¹ Phillips, *Reflections*, 87.

displaced missionaries had no clear indication for when they could return to their home in Mainland China.

Further, Hunker grew frustrated because he was not able to communicate with the Chinese people who also relocated to the Philippines. Mandarin Chinese, which Hunker had not learned, was the most commonly used language in China. After renting a home, Hunker began studying Mandarin Chinese. Eventually, he spoke Mandarin well enough to help establish a Mandarin-speaking church in Baguio in 1950.⁴²

During Chinese New Year in 1951, Hunker and his FMB colleague Oz Quick went to Taiwan for a three-week preaching trip.⁴³ The eagerness of the Chinese people in Taiwan to hear the gospel struck Hunker. In a letter to prayer supporters in the States, Hunker wrote of the eagerness he experienced:

Our work is largely to the two to three million Mandarin-speaking Chinese who have fled to Taiwan during the past few years. Never have we met such an eager response to the preaching of the gospel as we did there. With little effort, it was possible to attract large attentive crowds to evangelistic meetings. Probably the loss of home and poverty, the separation from loved ones on the mainland, and a spiritual void in their lives have created in many of them an attitude of readiness to listen to a Gospel that can offer personal victory and security in the face of such circumstances. Because the majority of the refugees are men and young men, many of them students and military personnel, there is now a critical missionary need for men-missionaries to preach and to aid in the establishment of new churches. The uncertain future of Taiwan makes the present need especially urgent. In view of growing communist power in the Orient, it becomes almost a matter of now or never.⁴⁴

Later that year, on May 30, 1951, the Hunkers returned to the US for a one-year furlough. Their first FMB missionary term was nearly five years. They left the field not knowing where they would go next.

⁴² Phillips, *Reflections*, 87.

⁴³ Carl Hunker, "Letter to Friends," May 1, 1951, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA. The FMB had six missionaries in Taiwan at this time, all of whom were single and female.

⁴⁴ Hunker, "Letter to Friends," May 1, 1951.

Life in Taiwan

The Hunkers' first term did not go as expected. While in Baguio, they came to realize that returning to Mainland China would not be possible, at least not for the foreseeable future. The uncertainty of the future did not deter the Hunkers, however. They knew that the Lord called them to long-term missionary service, and they resolved to go where they could make the greatest impact; they just did not know where that would be. In a letter to the FMB area director for Asia, Baker Cauthen, Hunker wrote, "Our basic conviction [concerning] our next term in the Orient, is to serve where we can make the greatest contribution for the Lord. . . . So, our conviction still is to work where we can fill the need."⁴⁵ God used the Hunkers' first term to prepare them to serve over three decades in Taiwan.

Calling to Taiwan

While on furlough in 1951, Hunker wrote to Cauthen to enquire about the possibility of serving in Taiwan. Hunker asked, "Do you have further plans about the work in Taiwan which would help us make our decision? . . . Taiwan continues to impress us as the place of greatest opportunity in the world, and I cannot get away from the experiences of early 1951 in Taiwan. So, we are still vitally interested in working there."⁴⁶

After a few exchanges with Cauthen and talking in depth with Charles Culpepper Sr. about his plans to establish a Baptist seminary in Taipei, Taiwan's capital, Hunker knew the Lord had called him and his family to Taiwan. Upon receiving the news of their transfer to Taiwan, Hunker wrote, "All along we have thought much in terms of going to Taiwan, but we have never felt at liberty to express ourselves freely with regard

⁴⁵ Carl Hunker, "Letter to Baker Cauthen," April 20, 1952, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁴⁶ Carl Hunker, "Letter to Baker Cauthen," January 18, 1952, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

to Taiwan because no definite invitation had come to join the work there.”⁴⁷ The Hunkers departed for Taiwan on August 1, 1952, out of San Francisco. Passing through Hong Kong on their way, they arrived in Keelung, Taiwan, on September 1, 1952.⁴⁸

Early Years in Taiwan

Hunker’s first role in Taiwan was pastoring Taichung Baptist Church, through which he organized new church plants and led evangelistic meetings.⁴⁹ However, he split his time between the church in Taichung and the newly established TBTS in Taipei. During his first year in Taiwan, Hunker traveled north to Taipei two times a week to teach at the seminary.⁵⁰ After a year of commuting, the Hunkers moved to Taipei in May 1953 to give more time to the seminary.⁵¹ Moving to Taipei allowed Hunker to teach three times a week and to invest more in the lives of the students. Hunker’s relinquishing his responsibilities as pastor of Taichung Baptist Church in Taichung opened the door for him to pastor Amoy Street Baptist Church (ASBC) in Taipei.⁵²

Church Ministry in Taiwan

Hunker pastored several local churches, but the church in which he invested the most time was ASBC, which experienced her greatest growth and planted the most

⁴⁷ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Baker Cauthen,” May 13, 1952, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁴⁸ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” February 16, 1953, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA; Hunker, “Oral History.” Keelung is on the northeast coast of Taiwan island.

⁴⁹ Phillips, *Reflections*, 87.

⁵⁰ Hunker, “Oral History.” Hunker also served as vice-president to TBTS starting in 1952.

⁵¹ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” November 24, 1953, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA; Phillips, *Reflections*, 87.

⁵² Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” November 24, 1953; “CBC Church Planting Tree,” Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

churches during Hunker’s tenure as senior pastor.⁵³ More than fifty churches have come out of ASBC’s church planting tree, which is more than 25 percent of all CBC churches.⁵⁴ Hunker made a direct impact on many CBC churches through the church planting ministry of ASBC. However, that is not the full extent of Hunker’s influence on CBC churches. As the seminary president, he impacted many students who planted and pastored churches all over Taiwan island—a subject I explain in greater detail in chapter 6.

Hunker pastored ASBC until a national leader was ready. On May 7, 1961, ASBC ordained and called Chou Chien-Chung—the nineteenth TBTS graduate and the first person ASBC ordained—to be the senior pastor.⁵⁵ Regarding Hunker, Chou explains, “He was the pastor of our church for many years, so he was like a spiritual father. We greatly respected him; he was a great missionary.”⁵⁶

In addition to pastoring ASBC, Hunker also pastored other congregations, such as Grace Baptist Church (GBC) in Taipei.⁵⁷ Although he planted many churches as the founding senior pastor, he remained closely connected to ASBC his whole time in Taipei.⁵⁸ Lin Duan, current chairman of the deacons for ASBC and disciple of Hunker,

⁵³ Hunker served as senior pastor of ASBC from 1953 to 1961. See Te-Jen Ke, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 18, 2020; Yen-Chen Peng, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 5, 2020; Jim Graham, telephone interview by author, February 27, 2020; Rei-Yi Tsai, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020; Peng, interview.

⁵⁴ Peng, interview; Rachel Tan, “Carl Hunker Memorial Service at Emmanuel Chinese Baptist Church in Kansas City,” January 23, 2016, DVD, 1:03:08.

⁵⁵ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” December 15, 1961, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA; Chien-Chung Chou, telephone interview by author, March 22, 2020; Ke, interview.

⁵⁶ Chou, interview.

⁵⁷ Three single female missionaries started GBC, and Hunker served as the first senior pastor. For the history of GBC, see Hunker, *Taiwan*, 19.

⁵⁸ Duan Lin, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020; Peng, interview.

explains that Hunker would sometimes transfer his membership to help start new churches or to serve as an interim pastor, but he would always transfer back to ASBC.⁵⁹

Regarding the need in Taipei for pastors, Phillips writes,

At that time, there was great opportunity to share Christ with the people. [The missionaries started many] new preaching points and Bible classes. There were only a few preachers to lead these newly developing churches. At one time, when other missionaries were on furlough, Carl was serving as pastor of three Taipei churches at the same time, although he and Jeannette worked mainly with [ASBC].⁶⁰

ASBC was the Hunkers' home where they spent the majority of their time.

Convention Ministry in Taiwan

Driven by a desire among Taiwan Baptists for all of Taiwan to know Christ, Baptist missionaries made plans in 1954 to form the Taiwan Baptist Convention (TBC).⁶¹ Hunker explained, "Gospel work was spreading so rapidly that we felt the Chinese should quickly become more involved."⁶² Taiwan Baptists elected three men, including Hunker, to draft the convention's constitution.⁶³ The other two men were Y. K. Chang, a full-time professor at the seminary, and Yang Mei-Tsai, a Chinese pastor and the first Chinese missionary to Taiwan.⁶⁴

The three men wrote a simple constitution in May 1954, and the supporting churches established the TBC in July 1954.⁶⁵ The convention had 11 Baptist churches, 22

⁵⁹ Lin, interview.

⁶⁰ Phillips, *Reflections*, 87.

⁶¹ Carl Hunker, "Email to Linda Phillips," April 2, 2004, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

⁶² Hunker, "Email to Linda Phillips," April 2, 2004.

⁶³ Carl Hunker, "Email to Linda Phillips," July 26, 2004, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

⁶⁴ Hunker, "Email to Linda Phillips," April 2, 2004.

⁶⁵ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 50; Carl Hunker, "Email to Linda Phillips," July 22, 2004, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

mission points, and 2,694 members at its founding.⁶⁶ One year after the convention formed, however, many of the member churches felt China would soon reopen. Believing they would one day return to the mainland, they elected to change the name from the *Taiwan Baptist Convention* to the *Chinese Baptist Convention*.⁶⁷

The purpose of the convention was clear: “cooperation for responsible evangelism.”⁶⁸ Hunker explained the purpose of the convention in the following way: “The convention has a threefold purpose: cooperation in strengthening the local church; cooperation in the mission of evangelizing their nation; and cooperation in worldwide evangelism.”⁶⁹ Reaching people for Christ united Taiwanese Baptists.

With the establishment of the convention, Taiwan Baptists now had a system through which they could cooperate for domestic and foreign missions. Hunker explained,

With great enthusiasm, Baptists wanted to enlarge the number of places of gospel outreach according to a master plan of a Baptist church in every major population center from north to south, then reaching out from those churches into the surrounding areas so that in a short time there were churches or chapels all along the major railroad from Keelung to Kaohsiung. There was a strong feeling of the need to cooperate in expanding evangelism [and] strengthening churches.⁷⁰

Elsewhere, he wrote,

Another expression of convention concern is a program of foreign missions. The young convention is not content with responsible discipleship for Taiwan only. It has sent its missionaries to work among overseas Chinese in other nations of the Orient. . . . Generous offerings demonstrate committed concern. . . . A large portion is for the support of Taiwan’s foreign missionaries.⁷¹

⁶⁶ See Hunker, “Email to Linda Phillips,” April 2, 2004; Hunker, “Email to Linda Phillips,” July 22, 2004. There were thirty FMB missionaries in Taiwan at the start of the CBC.

⁶⁷ Hunker, “Email to Linda Phillips,” July 26, 2004.

⁶⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 113.

⁶⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 114.

⁷⁰ Hunker, “Email to Linda Phillips,” July 26, 2004. See also Hunker, *Taiwan*, 85.

⁷¹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 115.

Hunker believed that Taiwan Baptists needed a strong spirit of cooperation in order to plant churches in every major city in Taiwan and reach the eighteen million Chinese outside of Mainland China.⁷²

Hunker expressed deep gratitude for his selection as one of the three men to draft the constitution for the CBC. He, and the others, were careful to draft a constitution that empowered the Chinese people and valued indigeneity. In an email correspondence to Phillips, Hunker wrote that he had “one guiding principle: in whatever [we do], be sure to involve the Chinese.”⁷³ He went on to explain that the idea of a convention did not originate with the Chinese. As missionaries supported by the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, the Baptist missionaries replicated this system for Taiwan Baptist churches; however, they were careful to empower and transition leadership to Chinese leaders as quickly as possible.⁷⁴

The convention formed in July 1953. Culpepper Sr. was the founding chairman, and Yang was the founding vice-chairman. Culpepper quickly transitioned chairman leadership to Yang, naming Hunker vice-chairman. Hunker served as vice-chairman for three years while the convention prepared a Chinese pastor to fill this office. Following that time, a national has served as the convention’s chairman and vice-chairman.⁷⁵

Ministry to Missionaries in Taiwan

Hunker significantly impacted young missionaries as well. One missionary writes,

⁷² Hunker, *Taiwan*, 116–17.

⁷³ Hunker, “Email to Linda Phillips,” April 2, 2004.

⁷⁴ Lottie Moon was an FMB missionary in China.

⁷⁵ Hunker, “Email to Linda Phillips,” April 2, 2004.

Carl never failed to inspire us and impress us with his ability to open the [Scriptures] and apply them to our situation. He was the first person called upon to lead in prayer when any weighty matter was before us. Carl just epitomized the loving, caring missionary, and to many of us, he took the place of pastor-counselor, too. Carl had a way of listening during discussions and when tensions rose or debate [became] too intense, he would inject a word of wisdom, many times with humor, and offer a solution or compromise that would almost certainly be approved by the group because [they] respected [him as a] man of God.⁷⁶

Other missionaries—that is, Phillips, Ron Winstead, LeRoy Hogue, and Debbie Weber—all agree with this sentiment.⁷⁷ For example, Weber expresses, “He was always gracious, always a gentleman. He was sort of a father figure to me.”⁷⁸ Hunker understood his ministry calling to include his fellow missionaries and not just caring for nationals.

Seminary Ministry in Taiwan

TBTS started on September 6, 1952, the same year the Hunkers arrived in Taiwan.⁷⁹ Culpepper Sr., who relocated from Shandong, China, where he was involved in the Shandong Revival, was the seminary’s founding president.⁸⁰ TBTS opened with three full-time professors (Culpepper Sr., Martha Franks, and Y. K. Chang) and three part-time professors (Hunker, Yang, and Charles Culpepper Jr.).⁸¹

TBTS had thirty full-time students when the Hunkers moved to Taipei in May 1953.⁸² Hunker saw the seminary as a “lifeline” for Taiwan Baptists. Upon moving to

⁷⁶ Herbert Ward Barker, *Patiently Run the Race: And Don’t Forget to Laugh along the Way* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2009); 150–51.

⁷⁷ Linda Phillips, telephone interview by author, March 13, 2020; Ron Winstead, email interview by author, March 4, 2020; LeRoy Hogue, telephone interview by author, March 3, 2020; Debbie Weber, email interview by author, March 11, 2020.

⁷⁸ Weber, interview.

⁷⁹ Carl Hunker, “Taiwan Baptist Seminary Faculty,” *Taiwan Journal: A Baptist Mission Review* 6 (July–August 1959): 3; Hunker, “Oral History.”

⁸⁰ C. L. Culpepper, *The Shantung Revival* (Atlanta: Crescendo, 1976). Shantung is an alternative romanized form of Shandong.

⁸¹ Hunker, “Taiwan Baptist Seminary Faculty,” 3.

⁸² Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” November 24, 1953, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

Taipei, he wrote, “Already our seminary has become a lifeline for our work in the northern part of the Island as students go out on weekends into the churches and chapels for preaching.”⁸³ The first seminary graduation was in May 1955 and included Chang Chih-Hsin. Hunker mentored Chang, who was also the assistant pastor at ASBC.⁸⁴

A year after Chang’s graduation, Tainan Baptist Church called him as senior pastor, at which time Chang became the first Chinese pastor to receive ordination in Taiwan.⁸⁵ Chang, under Hunker’s leadership, paved the way for many more Baptist graduates and ordained pastors to serve Baptist churches in Taiwan. The seminary went on to graduate eighty students in the first five years, and as of January 2016, more than twelve hundred students have graduated from TBTS.⁸⁶

In 1957, the Baptist Mission purchased land in Taipei, and in 1958, the seminary moved to its current campus.⁸⁷ Before the relocation, the seminary campus was located in the heart of Taipei Downtown and spread out over many buildings. In 1958, the seminary’s newly built campus included academic buildings, dormitories, an auditorium, a library, and faculty housing.⁸⁸ When the seminary moved to its current campus, it had seven full-time faculty members: four nationals and three FMB missionaries.⁸⁹ The seminary officially dedicated the new campus on May 31, 1959.⁹⁰

⁸³ Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” November 24, 1953.

⁸⁴ Chih-Hsin Chang, email interview by author, May 20, 2020. This dissertation references many contributors who share the Chang surname. Thus, in the footnotes, I use the full name when referring to anyone who shares the Chang surname.

⁸⁵ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” March 10, 1956, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁸⁶ Carl Hunker, “To the Glory of God,” December 1959, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA; Tan, “Carl Hunker Memorial Service,” January 23, 2016, DVD, 1:03:25.

⁸⁷ Hunker, “Oral History.”

⁸⁸ Hunker, “Oral History.”

⁸⁹ Carl Hunker, “From a Missionary’s Diary,” October 1958, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁹⁰ Jeanette Hunker, “Personal Report,” August 28, 1959, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

Life was tough on the Hunkers when they first moved to the new campus. For example, they did not have electricity or running water for the first few days.⁹¹ However, they were thankful that God had provided a place to shape the future leadership of the Baptist church in Taiwan.⁹²

In 1964, Culpepper Sr. retired, and a year later, in 1965, the TBTS trustees elected Hunker as the second president of the seminary.⁹³ Hunker and Culpepper Sr. had both hoped to elect a Chinese president, but they—along with the TBTS board of trustees—did not sense that a national leader was ready.⁹⁴ According to Phillips, Hunker never aspired to be president of the seminary, yet he devoted himself to the job and the students.⁹⁵

Oddly, Hunker never mentioned his election as president of the seminary in his annual letter to friends. He was silent on the transition other than to explain that he was nervous about taking on a new leadership role and was concerned about the seminary's declining enrollment.⁹⁶ On two occasions, he mentioned an increase in workload, but he did not give any indication as to why. In his 1964 FMB annual report, he wrote,

We arrived back in Taiwan from furlough just two days prior to the mission meeting in 1963. We are just now completing our first year on our fourth term of missionary service. Like each of our previous terms, this one [had] opportunities and challenges beyond our ability to accept or fulfill. My work continues to be in the same general

⁹¹ Hunker, "Oral History."

⁹² Phillips, *Reflections*, 87.

⁹³ Phillips, *Reflections*, 87. Hunker served as interim president of TBTS starting in 1963. See Carl Hunker, "Information Questionnaire," November 17, 1970, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA. He served as TBTS vice-president from 1952 to 1963 and as TBTS president from 1963 to 1981.

⁹⁴ Hunker, "Oral History." See also Ai-Hua Li, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 10, 2020; Ching-En Tseng, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 12, 2020; Chen-Kuang Chang, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 24, 2020; Phillips, interview. This dissertation references many contributors who share the Li surname. Thus, in the footnotes, I use the full name when referring to anyone who shares the Li surname.

⁹⁵ Phillips, interview.

⁹⁶ Hunker, "Oral History."

areas as my last term—the seminary, assistance in several chapels and churches in the Taipei area, a number of evangelistic meetings including several on Kinmen, Baptist Brotherhood writing and promotion, religious education work, and more committee meetings than I enjoy. But when I am tempted to complain, the Lord [reminds] me of the brevity of life, the more difficult life of most of my missionary friends in many other fields, the ache and longing of those who can no longer serve in Taiwan, and the blessedness of our life in Christ.⁹⁷

In his annual year-end newsletter to friends, he wrote,

Our year has not been without its struggles and problems, but always God has supplied richly, with grace and patience, for the needs of each day. Even though our work here is far more difficult than before and the disappointments many, there are times when we can evaluate objectively, and we are always surprised by the many evidences of continued and steady growth. As the years go by, we become increasingly grateful for personal gifts of health and the common blessings of each day.⁹⁸

The seminary’s enrollment had consistently declined year by year since 1961.⁹⁹ Declining enrollment numbers were not unique to TBTS, as other schools and seminaries were experiencing the same phenomenon.¹⁰⁰ Hunker’s response was to pray; he often knelt with students, asking for God’s mercy. Hunker also petitioned churches to pray and focused his efforts on strengthening the school. Phillips writes, “Carl worked hard to strengthen the faculty, improve the curriculum, expand the physical facilities, enlarge the library, and stabilize the school’s finances.”¹⁰¹

Hunker believed building a more reputable library was important for the seminary. In 1954, the library housed 650 books. By 1960, it had 5,000. By 1971, it had more than 10,000 books. By 1978, it had 15,000 books, and by 1990, the library held over 20,000 books.¹⁰² Phillips recalls, “I remember when we hit 20,000 books. Hunker

⁹⁷ Carl Hunker, “Personal Report,” December 1964, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁹⁸ Carl Hunker, “Christmas Letter,” October 15, 1964, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

⁹⁹ Hunker, “Oral History.”

¹⁰⁰ Hunker, “Oral History.”

¹⁰¹ Phillips, *Reflections*, 88.

¹⁰² See Hunker, “Oral History”; Phillips, interview.

was so excited that he got a box of chocolates, and at our faculty meeting, we celebrated 20,000 books in the library. He wanted the library to grow. We added about a thousand books each year I was there.”¹⁰³ Hunker’s leadership directly correlated to the building of the library, impacting the quality of education received by Taiwan Baptists.

Hunker took his job as president seriously; his priorities were to the seminary.¹⁰⁴ When FMB leadership asked him to be mission treasurer, he declined the privilege, fearing that the position would pull him from his seminary responsibilities and his local church work.¹⁰⁵ In addition to Hunker’s responsibilities as president of TBTS, he also served as the president of the Asia Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary (ABGTS), which began in 1962 as a collaboration between Baptist seminaries in the East and Southeast regions of the world to provide advanced degrees for future seminary professors and church leaders. Hunker resigned as president of ABGTS in 1977 because his duties there were hampering his duties at TBTS.¹⁰⁶

Hunker dedicated himself to the seminary, serving eighteen years as president.¹⁰⁷ However, it was never his intention to serve that long. Hunker tried to resign as president in 1971, when he felt that national leaders were ready to assume leadership; yet, it was not the right time.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ Phillips, interview. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

¹⁰⁴ David Hunker, email interview by author, February 29, 2020.

¹⁰⁵ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Winston Crawley,” July 10, 1959, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹⁰⁶ Carl Hunker, “Letter to the Board of Trustees for ABGTS,” January 25, 1977, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA. Hunker served as president of ABGTS from 1965 to 1977. See “Missionary Album 1975,” Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL. For more on ABGTS, see Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 51.

¹⁰⁷ Carl Hunker, “Information Questionnaire,” November 17, 1970, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹⁰⁸ Carl Hunker, “Letter to the TBTS Board of Trustees,” March 1971, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

Finding a qualified Chinese president proved more difficult than Culpepper Sr. and Hunker had expected. Hunker was distressed by the “brain drain” that Taiwan experienced by losing national leaders to other contexts.¹⁰⁹ One of the most disheartening experiences was losing Stephen Tang to Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary (HKBTS) in 1971.

Stephen Tang was a dean at TBTS. When the trustees of HKBTS asked Tang to serve as interim president in 1970, Hunker and other TBTS leaders unsuccessfully tried to persuade Tang to stay at TBTS and become the third president of the seminary. Hunker went as far as to submit a letter of resignation to the TBTS board of trustees in 1971, which he hoped would entice Tang to stay. He wrote,

After prayer over a long period of time, I have [decided] to write this letter to the Board of Trustees offering my resignation as president of the seminary, effective June 14, 1971, the date of our commencement service for this academic year.

My reasons for resigning are all strongly positive, and I feel [they] are for the good of our seminary as well as our total Christian witness in Taiwan. My decision is in recognition that our work has reached a level of development, which makes beneficial a change at this time. These are the reasons for my feeling this way:

1. I feel that we have national leadership who through dedication, training, experience, and maturity can well assume the responsibilities of the president of the seminary.
2. Also, I have come to feel that trends and recent developments in the religious and social life in Taiwan demand a clearer image of our seminary as being an integral part of Chinese life. Such a Chinese image will be both projected and strongly implemented through the selection of a Chinese head for our institution. Without such leadership, I feel that we will meet increasingly difficult problems in our work.
3. The strategy of Southern Baptist foreign mission work has always been one looking forward to national leadership in the churches and institutions as well as the total program of work in a country with which Southern Baptists are cooperating. [Since] the time of my response to God’s call to foreign mission service, [training national leaders] was my deep conviction, and from the beginning of our work in Taiwan, I have worked toward reaching this stage of development. This [conviction] has been a guiding principle in the training and the support of national leadership.
4. I have long hoped that at the beginning of the twentieth session of our seminary, which will be the fall session, 1971, we would have a Chinese president. In

¹⁰⁹ Hunker, “Oral History.”

accepting the presidency in 1965, I interpreted my role as one [who would prepare] the seminary for such a step. Prior to my last furlough in 1968–69, I felt that this time was drawing near. Since my return, I have been earnestly preparing for such a step in the development of our seminary program of work.¹¹⁰

However, despite Hunker’s best efforts, Tang declined TBTS’s offer and moved to Hong Kong.

After Tang accepted the HKBTS presidency, Hunker lamented, “The concept of national leadership has always been so much a part of my approach to missions, and the hope that we were moving to the point of seeing this accomplished, has made [Tang’s] leaving a blow that touches my whole life stance.”¹¹¹ Hunker remained resolute, however, and called on the Baptist churches to pray for revival. The following year, TBTS experienced its largest incoming class in fifteen years.¹¹² Four years later, the seminary graduated its largest graduating class to that date with nineteen students.¹¹³

Hunker continued to serve as TBTS president until 1981, when a national president was ready. Phillips writes, “By 1979 Carl was thinking about the need of a Chinese president to replace him, and he indicated that he would step down when that replacement was ready. The process to find his successor took three years.”¹¹⁴ In Hunker’s 1979 year-end report, he wrote,

Before going on furlough, the seminary was able to begin and make good progress on the project of inviting a Chinese president and inviting younger Chinese to join the faculty. . . . The establishment of a Search Committee for a new president followed my resignation as president. The convergence of a number of events and developments at one time at the seminary, in the convention, and in the Republic of China helped us to initiate this process. [The board of trustees] invited Professor

¹¹⁰ Hunker, “Letter to the TBTS Board of Trustees.”

¹¹¹ Carl Hunker, “Letter to James Belote,” May 19, 1971, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹¹² Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” December 1972, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹¹³ Carl Hunker, “Hit Team Interview,” March 25, 1976, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA. TBTS’s lowest student enrollment of Hunker’s tenure was in 1970.

¹¹⁴ Phillips, *Reflections*, 88.

Chang to be acting Dean in June, and in November they invited him to be acting president when Charles Culpepper [Jr.] left for furlough.¹¹⁵

1981 was a significant year for Hunker and TBTS. In his 1981 annual report, Hunker wrote, “In summary, although I did not accomplish all that I had hoped for, I cannot but praise God for what He did this year in our home, personal lives, and work in Taiwan. I will always remember 1981 as a very special year in my life.”¹¹⁶ In 1981, the seminary celebrated its thirtieth year as an institution, held its highest student enrollment in history with seventy-four full-time students, and appointed its first Chinese president, Chang Chen-Kuang.¹¹⁷

Finding the third president was a daunting task. Hunker and the TBTS board of trustees held a high standard for presidential candidates, setting six criteria to measure an applicant’s qualification and readiness.¹¹⁸ First, the candidate must be a man “who loves God and is filled with the Spirit.” Second, the candidate must care deeply for the church. The seminary is preparing ministers to serve the church, so the president must love the church. Third, the applicant must hold a doctoral degree and have proven his faithfulness to his academic studies. Fourth, this person must have a model family who will serve as a good example to the students. Fifth, the candidate must be willing to go through pain and difficulty to lead the seminary. And sixth, the candidate must be committed to working with CBC churches, the convention, other co-workers, and missionaries.

Hunker rejoiced at the calling of Chang, his good friend. Chang was a long-time member of Hunker’s TBTS leadership team and associate pastor at ASBC, where

¹¹⁵ Carl Hunker, “Personal Report,” December 1979, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTS.

¹¹⁶ Carl Hunker, “Personal Report,” December 1981, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTS.

¹¹⁷ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” October 8, 1981, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA; Phillips, *Reflections*, 88. TBTS Trustees appointed Chen-Kuang Chang as the third president of the seminary in October 1981. Chang, as early as 1978, began taking over duties as president, but he was not officially inaugurated until after he completed his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in 1981.

¹¹⁸ Hunker, “Oral History.”

Hunker personally mentored him.¹¹⁹ After completing his doctorate from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1981, Chang was ready to lead TBTS.¹²⁰

At this point in Hunker's career, he had served with the FMB for thirty-five years. At the request of the new TBTS president Chang, Hunker agreed to remain at the seminary for two years as a faculty member. He explained,

How we thank God that Dr. and Mrs. John Chang returned in July after he completed his Doctorate in Musical Arts. . . . On October 19 he was inaugurated as our first Chinese president. Earlier I had prayed much about my continuing at the seminary after Dr. Chang began his work because of the possibility of making him uncomfortable about assuming the leadership of the seminary. But upon his insistence, I stayed, and now I am convinced that it was wise to remain as it has been possible to gradually turn over to him many of the files and records belonging to the president's office.¹²¹

Chang knew that God had called Hunker to serve the Chinese people. He was thankful for Hunker's continued service to the seminary.¹²²

Two years later, and three months before the Hunkers were to retire, Jeanette passed away due to pancreatic cancer.¹²³ Doctors in the States diagnosed her the previous year, but after completing twenty-four rounds of radiation treatment, she insisted on returning to Taiwan.¹²⁴ Jeanette died the evening of the 1983 spring commencement ceremony.¹²⁵ As a way of processing his grief, Hunker recalled the night's events in a letter to a family friend:

¹¹⁹ Chen-Kuang Chang, interview.

¹²⁰ Chen-Kuang Chang, interview.

¹²¹ Carl Hunker "Personal Report," December 1981, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

¹²² Chen-Kuang Chang, interview.

¹²³ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 52.

¹²⁴ Phillips, *Reflections*, 88. Jeanette returned to the United States in July 1982 for treatment and decided to return to Taiwan the following October. See Carl Hunker, "Taiwan Newsletter," 1982, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL; Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 53.

¹²⁵ Hogue, interview.

A week ago tonight, the Lord called Jeanette to her heavenly home; so much has happened that it seems like a month ago. On Monday morning, we had our devotional time together, but Jeanette did no more talking than was absolutely necessary, as she was trying so hard to be comfortable and to get some rest. My last communication with her was about noon. After that, she slept as the dosage of pain injection was increased to give her some relief. I am so glad that Donal could be with her, as she knew what to do and what to say. I went to the commencement service, which was such a gracious expression of the love of these people for us. A young preacher sat by the window of the chapel listening for the telephone in case Donal needed to call. But [she] did not need to call me during the service.

I got back to the hospital by about 10:20 [p.m.]. I was having my devotional time alone as Jeanette was sleeping so soundly. [Suddenly], I heard her breathe deeply two times, and then she was gone. She left without a painful struggle; that is still a comfort to me. It was about 11:10 [p.m.].¹²⁶

In a separate letter to prayer supporters, he wrote,

How much she wanted to attend our commencement service for sixteen students, many of whom she had taught and whom she loved dearly. In a sense, the Lord gave her His own special commencement service as she passed away only an hour after the close of the commencement service on May 30th. She anticipated seeing friends and loved ones with the Lord, but said, “Best of all, I will see Jesus face to face.”¹²⁷

Following the memorial service, Hunker returned to the US, unsure of his plans for the future.

Life after Taiwan

After taking time to grieve and process Jeanette’s passing, Hunker determined that the Lord had called him back to Asia.¹²⁸ However, he was hesitant to return to Taiwan at that time. FMB leadership wrote a recommendation letter on his behalf to other FMB area leaders. A young leader in South Asia named Jerry Rankin responded and arranged theological training opportunities for Hunker in South and Southeast Asia.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Carl Hunker, “Letter to George Hays,” June 6, 1983, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA. “Donal” refers to Donal Culpepper, the wife of Charles Culpepper Jr. See Hunker, *Taiwan*, 60.

¹²⁷ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” August 1, 1983, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹²⁸ Pearson, *Taiwan Connections*, 54.

¹²⁹ See Jerry Rankin, “Letter to Roger Capps,” January 9, 1985, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA; Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” July 25, 1985, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA. Rankin was the associate area director of Southeast Asia when he met Hunker in 1984. He became FMB president in 1993.

Rankin was the FMB area director for India at the time, and he needed a veteran missionary who understood the “cross-cultural implications of contextualization.”¹³⁰

Regarding his experience with Hunker in India, Rankin says, “I think we were sitting in an airport talking and tears just came into his eyes. He said, ‘Jerry, this is amazing. I feel like my missionary career has come full circle. That this is how I started: discipling, training believers, church planning, and sharing in informal discipleship.’ He loved it.”¹³¹

Rankin continues,

He just loved that personal, informal village setting, where he was able to pour out his life and teach out of his wealth of understanding of the Scripture. And because of his age, and as someone who very readily expressed his emotions in the loss of his wife, and the grief that he was still experiencing from that, it was just so authentic and spiritually deep. It was like this ancient saint had been incarnated in their midst. And it impressed me the same way. There was just something very unique about the depth and authenticity of his spirituality and his humbleness.¹³²

Rankin goes on to say, “Though I would have considered myself a very mature Christian, I see him as that person I still desire to emulate and become like in my walk with the Lord.”¹³³

In all, Hunker provided theological education at Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary from June 28 to November 27, 1984; in Bangalore, India, from November 27, 1984, to May 1, 1985; in Sri Lanka from May 1 to May 27, 1985; and in Singapore from May 27 to June 10, 1985. In addition, he returned to Taipei to teach at TBTS from June 10, 1985, to May 1, 1986.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ Jerry Rankin, telephone interview by author, February 28, 2020.

¹³¹ Rankin, interview.

¹³² Rankin, interview. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

¹³³ Rankin, interview.

¹³⁴ “Carl Hunker Service Record,” 1998, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

Hunker officially retired as an FMB missionary on May 1, 1986.¹³⁵ Regarding Hunker's retirement ceremony, Barker writes,

When Dr. Hunker retired from service in Taiwan, he was feted by the seminary and churches where he had served. I was privileged to attend that retirement service, and I sat amazed as person after person rose to their feet and told how Carl had been a blessing in their lives. I knew people respected him as a pastor, teacher, and seminary president, but the people were not lauding him for that. So many of the Chinese from different walks of life had been the recipients of some kindness Carl had shown, and each praised him as a true man of God. I will never forget those extraordinary remarks from everyday people. Carl was a real missionary and a fine example to the rest of us.¹³⁶

Although Hunker officially retired from FMB service in May 1986, he remained in Taipei as a volunteer for six months post-retirement so he could serve as chairman of the 150th anniversary of Baptist work in China, which was held on November 10, 1986.¹³⁷

After the anniversary celebration, Hunker returned to the States and settled in Kansas City, Missouri.¹³⁸ He served as pastor and pastor emeritus for Emmanuel Chinese Baptist Church (ECBC) from 1988 until he passed away on January 7, 2016, at the age of 99.¹³⁹ He attended services at ECBC up until two weeks before his passing.¹⁴⁰ Don Gardner, ECBC founding pastor and former IMB missionary, shares, "The thing that stands out to me is that the word 'retirement' was not in his vocabulary; he sought to

¹³⁵ "Carl Hunker Service Record," 1998.

¹³⁶ Barker, *Patiently Run the Race*, 176–77.

¹³⁷ See Hunker, "Letter to Friends," December 15, 1986, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA; Ai-Hua Li, interview.

¹³⁸ Phillips, *Reflections*, 88.

¹³⁹ Don Gardner, email interview by author, March 4, 2020. Hunker initially agreed to serve as interim pastor of ECBC but ended up serving a total of twelve years as senior pastor.

¹⁴⁰ "Carl Hunker Obituary," January 23, 2016, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

serve the Lord until the day he departed this world.”¹⁴¹ Many of Hunker’s disciples attended his funeral to pay their respects, and some even flew from Taiwan to attend.¹⁴²

Hunker’s Impact

While all interviewees agree Hunker was a significant influence in the life and history of Taiwan Baptists, the degree to which he was influential is debatable. While some say he was the most influential missionary in Taiwan Baptist history, Hunker was a flawed human being like everyone else.¹⁴³ My purpose in this section is to report what the interviewees said about Hunker’s significance.

Yen Tzu-Nien expresses, “The model established by Dr. Hunker has worked very well with the Southern Baptist churches here and with the CBC and the churches and the seminary. So, in a nutshell, we can say that Dr. Hunker and his contemporaries set a good example, and this example has been very influential with Taiwan Baptists.”¹⁴⁴ Hunker was a genuinely humble person, and he never viewed himself above anyone else.

One former student says, “Why was Dr. Hunker so influential? Because of his faithfulness and his humility.”¹⁴⁵ Hunker sought after faithfulness, knowing that it was the Lord’s work. In doing so, he left a legacy that impacted a generation of Baptist leaders.

Tsai Rei-Yi gives three reasons for Hunker’s significant impact: (1) he was the president of the seminary; (2) he established the ministerial system at ASBC; and (3) he helped start the CBC. Tsai explains, “I would say that Dr. Hunker is one of the most influential Baptist missionaries in Taiwan Baptist life. And he is definitely the role model

¹⁴¹ Gardner, interview.

¹⁴² Lin, interview.

¹⁴³ Ke, interview.

¹⁴⁴ Tzu-Nien Yen, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020.

¹⁴⁵ Ai-Hua Li, interview.

for us. . . . [He] was the example the students and current leaders looked to: as president, pastor, mentor, teacher, and for moral living.”¹⁴⁶

ASBC’s current senior pastor, Peng Yen-Chen, explains that Hunker’s influence was primarily due to two factors: his leadership at the seminary and ASBC. He says,

The first reason for Hunker’s influence on Taiwan Baptists is that Dr. Hunker was the president of the seminary. He devoted himself to training seminary students, and 80% or 90% of them all went to Baptist churches to serve. The second reason why Dr. Hunker is important is that while Dr. Hunker was teaching at the seminary, he was also the lead pastor at ASBC. He required ASBC to comply with Baptist practice and in accordance with everything he taught at the seminary. So, many churches came to imitate ASBC. If they wanted to know what a Baptist church should look like, they would come and learn from this church, because Hunker based everything at ASBC on Baptist tradition. So, this is the second reason why I think Dr. Hunker was such a great influence.¹⁴⁷

In summary, Hunker taught Baptist principles at the seminary and used ASBC as the model of those principles in practice. Through his ministry at the seminary, he mentored the majority of Baptist leaders in the CBC.

Hunker knew that principles from a textbook were not enough. He used ASBC as a living example of what a Baptist church in Taiwan should be. Implementing the church system at ASBC, he then required every seminary student to observe and learn from this system. Consequently, they implemented similar principles in the churches they planted and pastored.¹⁴⁸ According to former CBC executive director Tseng Ching-En, Hunker’s influence on ASBC is the reason ASBC is still stable today.¹⁴⁹ Hunker not only influenced the theology of the convention’s pastors, but he also shaped their ministry models as well.

¹⁴⁶ See Rei-Yi Tsai, email interview by author, March 1, 2020.

¹⁴⁷ Peng, interview. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

¹⁴⁸ Tseng, interview.

¹⁴⁹ Tseng, interview.

Concerning Hunker's significance, Tseng says, "Because he's our example, he's our model; so, as early as I was a student, I trusted him completely."¹⁵⁰ In clarifying his meaning, Tseng comments that Hunker's Chinese speaking ability was not the best, nor was he the most influential teacher. However, Hunker set the example of what it meant to be a husband, father, professor, administrator, counselor, dean, president, pastor, and missionary.¹⁵¹ By living on campus and knowing students well, Hunker built personal relationships with students that lasted a lifetime.

Responding to a question concerning Hunker's influence on the life and history of Taiwan Baptists, Ke Te-Jen, one of the first converts whom ASBC baptized, explains that the Baptist church was growing rapidly when Hunker first came to Taiwan, allowing Hunker to influence the first generation of Baptist leaders. The second factor Ke explains is that Hunker was the second president of the seminary, and he taught many students who, in turn, pastored the churches. The third factor is that Hunker was easily accessible to people. "People are willing to talk with him about their problems and to get advice from him," Ke explains.¹⁵² He continues, "Christians do not like to look at somebody as authoritative, but Dr. Hunker had good learning and was very experienced. We considered him a representative of Southern Baptists. We were happy to abide by whatever he said, and so this is also why he became influential."¹⁵³

Responding to a question about whether Hunker was the most influential missionary in Taiwan Baptist history, Ke states, "I think it is appropriate to say that Dr. Hunker was the most influential figure throughout the history of Taiwan Baptist denomination. Except, though, in [the case of the seminary], because Dr. Culpepper was

¹⁵⁰ Tseng, interview.

¹⁵¹ Tseng, interview.

¹⁵² Ke, interview.

¹⁵³ Ke, interview.

the founder of the seminary. So, in [regard] to the seminary, Dr. Hunker comes as the second most influential.”¹⁵⁴

Responding to the same question, retired pastor Xue Ming-Guang says, “Oh yes, of course, especially for my generation . . . because the pastors of my generation received all of our theological training and preparation from Dr. Hunker. And, in turn, we influenced the next generation. So, yes, Dr. Hunker is quite influential in the history of Taiwan Baptists.”¹⁵⁵

Another pastor, Li Chien-Hu, states,

Different presidents had different contributions to the seminary, and different missionaries have different contributions to the history of Baptists. . . . So, regarding Dr. Hunker’s contribution, I would like to say what Paul said in the Bible: “Some people plant, but it is God that makes it grow.” So, what I would say about Dr. Hunker is that he laid the most solid and the [sturdiest] foundation for Taiwan Baptists. Different people have different opinions about Dr. Hunker, but I think Dr. Hunker, of all the missionaries, made the greatest contribution to Taiwan Baptist history.¹⁵⁶

Another church leader, Chen Shou-Sui, explains Hunker’s influence in the following way:

Pastor Hunker spent a long-time doing evangelism in Taiwan. He often preached the gospel message in Baptist churches across Taiwan. There are a great number of people who know him. Therefore, he had a profound influence on the believers and Baptist churches. However, Pastor Hunker’s influence came from his long-term vision and personality, which influenced others.¹⁵⁷

Chen continues,

First, [Hunker] had a deep sense of mission, which inspired people to have enthusiasm for evangelism. Second, he had a long-term vision, which attracted people to follow him. Third, he had a sense of humor and enthusiasm, and he often encouraged people and attracted people to be near him. Fourth, he had excellent administrative gifts. Students and church workers alike followed his administrative

¹⁵⁴ Ke, interview.

¹⁵⁵ Ming-Guang Xue, telephone interview by author, March 25, 2020. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

¹⁵⁶ Chien-Hu Li, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2020.

¹⁵⁷ Shou-Sui Chen, email interview by author, March 13, 2020.

skills. Fifth, he was a pastor who loved to pray. After talking with people, he would always hold the other person's hand or knelt on the ground together to pray with the person. His prayers were earnest and sincere, and [he]made people feel like they were very close to God. And sixth, he is a modest, good shepherd, who treated people with humility.¹⁵⁸

Hunker showed many qualities that allowed him to impact others.

Ron West, former FMB missionary to Taiwan, also speaks to the influence that Hunker had as TBTS president:

Being a seminary professor and president of the seminary gave him a status no other missionary had except maybe the first Dr. Culpepper who was also seminary president. The Chinese revere teachers and give them great respect. Since almost all of our pastors attended the Taiwan seminary, they knew him, and he knew them. The rest of us mainly knew the pastors who lived in our area.¹⁵⁹

Serving as a professor and seminary professor for over thirty years provided Hunker with opportunities few others ever had.

Hunker impacted not only a generation of Baptist pastors and church leaders, but he also had the opportunity to impact the Taiwan culture as well. Pastor Ho Ching-Tao explains that Hunker was also an “expert of rituals.”¹⁶⁰ When Chiang Kai-Shek passed away, Baptist pastor Chow Lien-Hwa oversaw the funeral service. President Chiang was a professing believer, and Chow was his personal chaplain and pastor. Chow turned to Hunker for guidance in conducting a Christian funeral. Ho explains, “Hunker practically taught Chow everything he should do, even how he should walk during the ceremony. So, practically everything pastor Chow did [for the ceremony] was based on Dr. Hunker’s advice or suggestion.”¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Chen, interview.

¹⁵⁹ Ron West, email interview by author, March 16, 2020.

¹⁶⁰ Ching-Tao Ho, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020.

¹⁶¹ Ho, interview.

Hunker was a significant leader for the missionaries, too. In 1963, the FMB collected biographic data on Hunker. Hugh Peterson, administrative dean at SBTS, characterized Hunker with the following description:

Carl Hunker's official assignment in Taiwan is in the field of theological education. . . . If, however, one were to ask Carl's fellow missionaries concerning his most distinctive contribution to the cause of Christ in Taiwan, they would probably cite his work as a counselor and friend both to missionaries and to his Chinese brethren. One missionary has said that "apart from Dr. C. L. Culpepper Sr., who has been working with the Chinese for many years, Dr. Hunker is the missionary to whom people in Taiwan most naturally look for wise and sympathetic counsel in dealing with personal problems or with matters related to Baptist life and work."¹⁶²

The missionary and Chinese communities both loved Hunker.¹⁶³

Rankin shares an impactful story demonstrating Hunker's influence on future generations of missionaries:

I remember when I became FMB President, we had a missionary appointment service in Kansas City. I did not know Hunker would be there. The program was all outlined and planned, but I quickly canceled the trustee who was going to lead the dedication prayer and instead asked Hunker to come up to the platform and pray for these missionaries. I wish I had a recording of that appointment service. I do not think we ever had such an authentic—out of this lifetime experience—dedication for new missionaries. We felt like he had ushered us into the presence of God, and God's Spirit was just truly being poured out and anointing these new missionaries.¹⁶⁴

Even in retirement, Hunker impacted the FMB president and others.

Conclusion

Carl Hunker served with the FMB for forty years, spending thirty-four of those years in Taiwan. He was a pastor, planter, professor, president, founder, counselor, and mentor. He sacrificed greatly for the Baptist church in Taiwan and left behind a legacy of

¹⁶² Hugh R. Peterson, "Operation Baptist Biography Data Form for Living Person," March 29, 1963.

¹⁶³ Weber, interview.

¹⁶⁴ Rankin, interview. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

disciples who continued the work he showed them. Hunker left an indelible mark on the life and history of Taiwan Baptists, and the purpose of this dissertation is to understand how he was able to make a meaningful impact throughout his life. In what follows, I show that Hunker's profound influence on the life of Taiwan Baptists is primarily due to his care for people, passion for the lost, understanding of the culture, and commitment to indigeneity.

CHAPTER 3

HUNKER’S CARE FOR PEOPLE

Carl Hunker influenced the life and history of Taiwan Baptists in many ways. He was not the most polished preacher, gifted linguist, or accomplished scholar. He was, however, a devoted missionary with a pastor’s heart who genuinely cared for people, and that care garnered deep trust from, and lasting influence on, his disciples and colleagues. One disciple expresses, “Dr. Hunker was . . . very caring towards students. He often invited them to pray and share their spiritual lives. Because of this, he nurtured [many] pastors.”¹ Summing up Hunker’s ability to draw people to himself in a humble and caring way, his daughter, Joyce Lynn Maslin, explains, “Many had a better command of Mandarin than he did, but he had a certain quality. And I do not know how to describe it, [he] just drew respect. . . . It was his humility combined with his servant heart and his great passion, which just resulted in leadership.”²

When asked how Hunker became so influential in the lives of so many, Tsai Rei-Yi responded, “We knew he cared about us.”³ Hunker successfully built personal relationships with his Chinese mentees because they did not doubt his care and concern for them. Tsai continues,

I respect Dr. Hunker with all my heart. He dedicated his life to spreading the gospel, and he had the heart of a shepherd. He was a warm and gentle person; he always encouraged the people. He cared about details and was a wonderful leader and administrator. He especially valued prayer. He was humble, and all the missionaries

¹ Chi Wang, email interview by author, March 14, 2020.

² Joyce Lynn Maslin, email interview by author, February 29, 2020.

³ Rei-Yi Tsai, email interview by author, March 1, 2020.

respected him. [In summary], he had boundless love and care for people, especially the Chinese.⁴

Hunker's love and care for people established strong relationships.

Many missionaries have served in Taiwan, all of whom cared for the people to some degree, but there was something different about the way Hunker cared for people.

Jim Graham explains,

[Hunker] was just noted for being a real person. . . . He loved people and cared well for them. I think all missionaries love the people and value them, but for some reason, he just connected in a way that other people did not. Some of it is gifting, some of it is a skill, but everybody just thought that they were important when they were around him and that they mattered, and that is incredibly life-giving and confidence-building in people.⁵

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how Hunker's care for people influenced the life and history of Taiwan Baptists. In order to understand Hunker's care for his disciples, I asked the question "How did Hunker demonstrate care for people?" By my asking this question in my interviews, four elements concerning his care for people came to light.⁶

First, my research revealed the focus of Hunker's care. Hunker cared about people's personal relationships with Jesus, their families, and their churches. To demonstrate this point, I examine each focus and provide examples of Hunker's care in each way.

The second element that came to light was how Hunker expressed his care. His disciples and missionary colleagues did not feel like ministry projects or tasks; they knew Hunker genuinely cared about who they were and how they were doing. He demonstrated

⁴ Tsai, interview, March 1, 2020. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

⁵ Jim Graham, telephone interview by author, February 27, 2020.

⁶ Research for this chapter primarily came from qualitative interviews. While primary sources helped me understand Hunker's life and ministry, his care for people is best understood by hearing the stories of those for whom he cared. Thus, interviewing proved to be the most valuable research tool for understanding how Hunker's care for people impacted Taiwan Baptist history.

his care for people in simple, practical ways. For example, the four most common expressions of Hunker's care were prayer, kindness, name memorization, and relational priority. While all simple, these expressions made a significant impact on people.

The third element that came to light was the connection between Hunker's genuine care for them and his character. My research revealed three character qualities that Hunker's disciples recognized in him: humility, servanthood, and a strong work ethic. By making the connection between Hunker's character and his care for them, his disciples more gladly trusted his intentions and allowed him to care for them.

The last element my research revealed was how the recipients of Hunker's care imitated the example they received from him. Hunker did not direct his disciples to imitate his example; his disciples imitated his example naturally, understanding the impact care has on a person. In this final section of the chapter, I show how Hunker's disciples and colleagues imitated the care they received from him to others.

The Focus of Hunker's Care

Perhaps the most meaningful compliment former students paid to Hunker was calling him their spiritual father. Many looked to him as a spiritual father-figure, and he would counsel them as a father would his child—with care and concern.⁷ One pastor explains, “Dr. Hunker had a true heart and a true concern for the Chinese people, and we felt like he was a spiritual father to us. I am on the verge of crying when I speak about him in this regard.”⁸ This particular pastor knew Hunker from an early age but did not sense God's calling to ministry until he was in his fifties. He considers Hunker one of the most significant spiritual influences in his life, even before he entered the seminary.

⁷ See Chin-Kuei Chung, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 23, 2020; Debbie Weber, email interview by author, March 11, 2020.

⁸ Chung, interview.

Another pastor expresses, “Dr. Hunker was a spiritual father to many of us. Dr. Hunker had a great influence on me. He was like my spiritual father.”⁹ Another student notes, “Well, what I remember is that he treated every student like his brother or sister. He treated us and everyone as we were members of his family. Therefore, we love him very much.”¹⁰

Retired pastor Ho Ching-Tao explains, “We always felt like he was the father of the Baptist family because he was concerned about everything, whether it was big or small, whether it was important or trivial. He wanted to know everything, and he did not just tell people to do things; he did many things himself.”¹¹ Ho’s wife shares,

We can use the authority of love to care about people. I think Dr. Hunker gave us a very good model as being a father. The Chinese people have a stereotypical impression of a father being very strict and severe. However, Dr. Hunker demonstrated a fatherly image of love, care, and concern. People think the role of being a missionary and a pastor are different, but Dr. Hunker thinks that these two are not that different and can be one.¹²

Hunker’s fatherly model resonated with his mentees. Hunker understood many looked to him for spiritual leadership, and he embraced that responsibility, providing spiritual leadership in three ways: one’s personal spiritual walk, family ministry, and church ministry. Even decades later, Hunker’s mentees recall the impact Hunker had on their lives and ministries.

⁹ Huai-Su Chuang, interview by author, Taoyuan, Taiwan, March 20, 2020.

¹⁰ Ping-Feng Kao, telephone interview by author, March 17, 2020.

¹¹ Ching-Tao Ho, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020.

¹² Hsiu-Mei Chang, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

Personal Spiritual Walk

Hunker's first concern was for the "personal and spiritual lives of the students."¹³ Li Chien-Hu expresses, "Dr. Hunker was like a magnet that attracted students. He did not care about the grades that you made; he cared [about you]."¹⁴ Tseng Ching-En adds, "He did not just care about you superficially. He cared about what is inside of you, including your spiritual condition and your status in the presence of God. He was also a very good counselor."¹⁵ Hunker was truly concerned about the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the people.

Hunker encouraged each student to begin the day with the Lord in Bible study and prayer.¹⁶ He modeled this practice by meeting with students in his office and challenging them in their walk.¹⁷ He used the years they had together at the seminary to cultivate spiritual disciplines and Christian character.¹⁸ He knew that if students did not develop these disciplines during these few formative years, it would be difficult for them to develop the character needed to withstand the pressures of the world later.

Hunker's spiritual leadership impacted the personal lives of his missionary colleagues, too. LeRoy Hogue recalls how one of Hunker's chapel messages (titled "You Cannot Go Home Again") impacted him as a young missionary. Hogue shares his reaction as he listened to Hunker's message that night: "I was angry. I was really struggling. [Hunker] was saying I could not go home again."¹⁹ However, what Hogue

¹³ Linda Phillips, *Reflections of the Glory of God: Biographical Sketches of Taiwan Baptists Co-Workers* (Taipei: Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002), 88.

¹⁴ Chien-Hu Li, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2020.

¹⁵ Ching-En Tseng, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 12, 2020.

¹⁶ Chung, interview.

¹⁷ Rei-Yi Tsai, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020.

¹⁸ W. Carl Hunker, *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1970), 121.

¹⁹ LeRoy Hogue, telephone interview by author, March 3, 2020.

came to understand is that Hunker was reminding young missionaries that “home is not what it was when you left. It has changed. You have changed. Things have happened. You really cannot go home again. I realized that he was telling the truth, but it took me a while to realize that.”²⁰ Hogue, as well as the other missionaries, respected Hunker’s spiritual leadership in their lives and looked to him for guidance as they adjusted to life in Taiwan.

Family Ministry

Hunker cared not only for his students but their family members as well. Tsai explains that he was the first person from his family to become a believer. Hunker prayed for Tsai’s family to believe, and eventually, they did.²¹ Others share how Hunker would ask about family members and pray with the students for those family members.²² Hunker’s helping students pray for family members taught the students how to minister to family members, especially those whose family members did not agree with their decision to attend seminary.

One retired pastor, Chuang Huai-Su, explains how Hunker prayed and cared for him as he was learning to minister to family members who had rejected him because of the gospel:

Before I took the entrance exam and entered the seminary, I went to see Dr. Hunker. I shared with him how God called me [into ministry.] After he heard my story, he told me about the seminary and encouraged me to pursue studies there.

I grew up in a traditional Chinese family. Because of this, I did not tell my family I took the seminary entrance exam until after the seminary admitted me. I knew there would be a major conflict if I told my family I was going to study at the seminary. Therefore, I asked Dr. Hunker to pray for me. Dr. Hunker encouraged me by saying he would pray for me.

²⁰ Hogue, interview.

²¹ Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

²² See Chuang, interview; Chung, interview; Chien-Hu Li, interview.

On August 18, 1980, I went to the seminary for orientation. Before the orientation, Dr. Hunker wrote me three letters saying that although I was facing a major challenge and conflict, he still encouraged me to pursue studies at the seminary. My parents believed those who pursued studies at the seminary were those who are the most useless, cannot find a better job, or could not find a better future. They thought people who went to seminary were at the bottom of society. They thought that if I followed the call of God, I would be betraying my ancestors and betraying our traditional religion. They also thought that because I was the oldest son of the family, if I pursue my studies at the seminary, then all they had invested in me, would come to nothing. This [perspective] was their belief. So, they gave me an ultimatum saying that if I pursue my studies at the seminary, they will break the relationship with me.

I was not allowed to enter the family again. It was during this time that Dr. Hunker's three letters gave me a lot of encouragement and comfort. In his letters, he said that he would not stop praying for me. I was living in Taichung, and it would take two to three hours for me to get to the seminary from there. I was supposed to show up on a Monday afternoon, August 18, for orientation. But the morning of orientation, I stayed at home because I was struggling. At one point, I knelt and prayed to God. I prayed, saying, "I give my parents and my whole family to you. Please take care and look after them." After I prayed, I took my baggage and left home. On the day that I arrived at the seminary, I found that many teachers from the seminary were praying for me because I had not arrived on time. When I finally showed up, they were all moved, especially Dr. Hunker. Dr. Hunker hugged me and said it was good to see me.

The reason I had the courage to go to the seminary was because of Dr. Hunker's three letters, and all the while he was encouraging and praying for me. Without Dr. Hunker, I could not have made up my mind to go to the seminary. So, for me, attending the seminary was largely due to Dr. Hunker's encouragement.

While I was studying at the seminary, Dr. Hunker was always very concerned about me. He always encouraged me. After I graduated, I returned home, and finally, my parents accepted me because it was a fact that could not be changed. I am thankful to the Lord that after my parents passed away, my whole family accepted Jesus as their savior. So, Dr. Hunker had a very great influence on my life and my family.²³

Hunker cared about students' family members, knowing many students had family members who were not believers. He would pray for them with the students and would offer encouragement as needed. In doing so, he cared for the students and taught them how to care for their family members, no matter how difficult it might be.²⁴

²³ Chuang, interview. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

²⁴ Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

Hunker also challenged those who were married to be godly spouses and those who were parents to be godly influences on their kids. Tseng expresses that he knew that every time Hunker saw him, he was going to ask about his wife and son and whether they had harmony in the family.²⁵ Hunker cared about the students and the earthly relationships they had. He challenged students to be a godly example in their homes and not just in the seminary classroom and the church.

Church Ministry

Helping students plant and pastor Baptist churches was Hunker's third spiritual leadership focus. According to Xue Ming-Guang, Hunker instilled five Baptist principles in his students to help them cultivate and lead Baptist churches:

As a pastor, Dr. Hunker was the one to whom I looked. I respected him and his principles very much. Dr. Hunker had five main principles he obeyed. These five principles are from the Baptist denomination. The first principle is that he regarded the Bible as the ultimate authority on everything. The second principle is about baptism and the Lord's Supper. His theological position is that baptism must be by full immersion in water, and the second is that we must observe the Lord's Supper as a sacred ceremony. Third, he believed that every believer is a priest; so, he does not believe in a religious hierarchy. For example, every believer is the same in the presence of God, so a pastor is not higher than an ordinary believer. So, therefore, unlike Catholics, he believes that every person can communicate with God. Therefore, because of this belief in the Baptist system, when there is a vote, everyone casts a vote, and every vote is equal. Fourth, Hunker believed that every church is autonomous, so no other church should interfere with the operation of another church. Fifth, as Baptists, we believe politics and religion are separate. I have been following these principles when I deal with problems and other people's problems. These are the five principles that I know Dr. Hunker obeyed.²⁶

Hunker cared for his mentees as a father caring for his children, and he instilled biblical principles in them to cultivate Christian character and Baptist conviction.

Hunker also provided spiritual leadership in the way he cared for graduates. Many pastors express ways Hunker helped them even after they had graduated.²⁷ They

²⁵ Tseng, interview.

²⁶ Ming-Guang Xue, telephone interview by author, March 25, 2020.

²⁷ See Chien-Hu Li, interview; Xue, interview; Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

had questions about how to handle conflicts with deacons, church members, and other pastors.²⁸ Hunker always provided helpful advice, even if he was unable to give the young pastors a direct solution to the problem. Further, Hunker used weekend revival services and church visitation tours to encourage graduates.²⁹ Xue explains, “Later, when I worked as a minister of Jingmei Baptist Church, he would still come to visit me with love and care.”³⁰

As mentioned, many considered Hunker their father in the faith, looking to him often to provide spiritual leadership. Hunker embraced that responsibility, providing spiritual leadership for his mentees’ personal spiritual walk, family members, and church ministry. While Hunker focused his care for his disciples in these three areas, he expressed that care in simple, practical ways.

Expressions of Hunker’s Care

My interviews revealed three areas where Hunker provided spiritual leadership, and they also revealed common ways Hunker expressed his care and concern. The four most common expressions of Hunker’s care were prayer, kindness, name memorization, and relational priority. While all simple, these expressions made a profound impact on people.

Prayer

Hunker demonstrated tangible care through prayer for others.³¹ Pastor Chung Chin-Kuei explains that Hunker encouraged him to attend the seminary for twenty years

²⁸ Chien-Hu Li, interview.

²⁹ Weber, interview.

³⁰ Xue, interview.

³¹ David Hunker, email interview by author, February 29, 2020.

before he did, but what impressed Chung the most was that Hunker never stopped praying for him over those two decades. He explains,

I felt the love of Hunker because I could see that Dr. Hunker was very concerned about me and that he really cared about me when he would invite me to the seminary. Take, for example, on the opening day of the seminary, he called me to the front to pray for me and to tell the congregation that this is the one whom he had been praying for over twenty years. He also did this with the other students and introduced everybody one by one. This [gesture] shows that he really cared about the students and the people of Taiwan.³²

Chung is not the only student who shares this kind of story.³³ Many former students share stories of Hunker's care by the way he prayed for them.³⁴ Knowing many of these stories, his daughter comments, "We felt we were in the presence of God when he prayed."³⁵

Hunker believed not only in the power of prayer but also in the necessity to train students to pray. He would even lead students to kneel and pray in the classrooms to teach them the importance of the discipline. The Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary (TBTS) museum has an exhibit dedicated to Hunker's presidency, and that exhibit includes pictures of Hunker kneeling in classrooms with students as they prayed together.

Praying on his knees was a common occurrence for Hunker. He would commonly use a prayer mat to kneel on his knees to pray.³⁶ When he retired, he took two prayer mats with him to the States—one for him and one for whoever was praying with him.³⁷

³² Chung, interview.

³³ Chuang, interview.

³⁴ Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020; Xue, interview.

³⁵ Maslin, interview.

³⁶ Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

³⁷ David Hunker, interview. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

Hunker also spent time modeling prayer through his morning devotions. His students recall how he would invite one student a day to join him at 6:00 am in his office for Bible study and prayer.³⁸ At that time, Hunker would read a passage of Scripture, discuss it with the student, ask how he could pray for that student and his or her family, and then pray with the student.³⁹ One former student spoke to the meaningfulness of his prayer time with Hunker, saying, “Dr. Hunker was very caring, even in very small details, and he showed great concern for the seminary students. Sometimes he would call students into his office for morning prayer and ask the students if they have any difficulties or if they have any needs, and, if so if there was anything he could do to help.”⁴⁰ Hunker’s early morning investments in students formed their theology of prayer and challenged them in their devotional life.

Hunker’s commitment to caring for students in this way impacted one of his students in such a way that the student has continued the tradition. Tsai recalls the impact these early morning meetings with Hunker had on him and others while they were young seminary students. When Tsai became TBTS president, he reinstated the practice, and for the past twenty-five years, he has invited a different student to his office every morning to study and pray together.⁴¹

Missionary colleagues also noticed Hunker’s dedication to prayer. One colleague shares,

He was certainly a man of prayer. He did everything that he could to impact the lives of other people around him, for example, the faculty members, the old missionaries like myself, and the students. Our prayer meetings were about thirty minutes to an hour. They would be quite long prayer meetings. We would pray in

³⁸ See Linda Phillips, telephone interview by author, March 13, 2020; Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020; Tseng, interview.

³⁹ Phillips, interview.

⁴⁰ Chien-Hu Li, interview.

⁴¹ Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

different groups and for different things. As the seminary president, he emphasized prayer. The students were impacted by the emphases on prayer.⁴²

Students and missionaries alike considered Hunker a man of prayer.

Kindness

Another way Hunker demonstrated his care for people was through acts of kindness. For example, Hunker drove young families to the hospital when the wife was in labor, gave financially when he could, and provided for physical needs as he was able.⁴³ One former student shares, “Dr. Hunker is also very kind and full of love. For example, a pastor's wife had leukemia and needed blood transfusions. Many people offered to donate blood to help this pastor’s wife, and Dr. Hunker was one of them, even though he was very advanced in age.”⁴⁴ Graham also shares a story of Hunker’s bringing medicine back from the United States for a pastor with a rare bone disease. He went straight from the airport after returning from furlough to the pastor’s home to deliver the medicine.⁴⁵

Two more interviewees share stories about how Hunker demonstrated genuine care by forgiving those who wronged him. For example, one former student shares a story of Hunker’s forgiving a burglar who robbed his seminary home one weekend.⁴⁶ Another student shares how Hunker forgave the wife of a student who stabbed him with a knife: “Every time Dr. Hunker finished his lectures, many students would ask questions, but there was one student whose wife had a mental disorder and became impatient. She

⁴² Hogue, interview.

⁴³ Hsiu-Mei Chang, interview.

⁴⁴ Ai-Hua Li, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 10, 2020. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

⁴⁵ Graham, interview.

⁴⁶ Bih-Feng Nien, email interview by author, March 31, 2020.

took a knife and cut Dr. Hunker [on the leg], and he was wounded. But Dr. Hunker did not resent her, and afterward, they still maintained a good friendship.”⁴⁷

Whether it was looking for ways to show tangible care or forgiving those who wronged him, Hunker demonstrated his care, and his students noticed. Xue affirms Hunker loved his students very much, noting, “If there were ever anything that Dr. Hunker could do, he would do his best to help the students.”⁴⁸ Hunker’s kindness demonstrated genuine care.

Name Memorization

Remembering everyone’s name was another way Hunker demonstrated care for his students. Hunker once gave an award for “best teacher” to Chinese professor Chow Lien-Hwa. After receiving the award, though, Chow told a group of students that he did not deserve it because he could not recognize every student’s name like Hunker.⁴⁹ Knowing the names of his students became one of the things seminary alumni remembered most about Hunker. “Dr. Hunker paid attention to small details, for example, to the student’s life and the student’s wellbeing. [He] could call every student by name,” remarked Li.⁵⁰ Former TBTS student and current Chinese Baptist Convention (CBC) president Nien Bih-Feng comments, “Pastor Hunker often carried a notebook with him, and in the notebook were the names of those for whom he had been praying. He prayed for these people every day, and many of those who entered the seminary were those he had prayed for daily.”⁵¹ Hunker’s discipline of praying for students by name continued throughout his tenure as seminary president.

⁴⁷ Ai-Hua Li, interview.

⁴⁸ Xue, interview.

⁴⁹ Chien-Hu Li, interview.

⁵⁰ Chien-Hu Li, interview.

⁵¹ Nien, interview.

Hunker's daughter further explains how Hunker valued praying for students by name. She comments, "I felt that a significant part of his life was prayer, and I called it the underpinning of everything. We have found prayer notebooks with lists of [names] for whom he [prayed for] regularly. He often went very early to his office to pray."⁵²

Linda Phillips expounds on Hunker's discipline to pray for disciples by name, commenting,

Dr. Hunker loved his students; he prayed for his students. One time, he told me how he prayed for his students. He would start in Taipei, and thinking of the churches, would go down the Island city by city and then back up to Taipei. He would pray for each one of the pastors of those churches each day. I think that was probably one reason why he had a great influence on the convention and the local churches.⁵³

Hunker committed himself to prayer for each church and pastor by name.

Hunker not only knew the names of the current students; he remembered the names of former students as well. One former student shares, "Once he asked me to go with him to Taichung to visit the pastors and the evangelists there, and one thing that impressed me about him is that he remembered everybody's name. He knew everybody by their name."⁵⁴ Hunker's desire to know and remember everyone's name meant much to his mentees. They knew they were important to him.

Relational Priority

The last way Hunker's mentees and missionary colleagues describe Hunker's demonstration of care for people was his prioritizing relationships over tasks. No matter how busy he was, Hunker made time for people.⁵⁵ Former Foreign Mission Board (FMB) missionary Robert Burris affirms the importance of relationships in Chinese culture when

⁵² Maslin, interview.

⁵³ Phillips, interview. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

⁵⁴ Ho, interview.

⁵⁵ Robert Burris, email interview by author, March 5, 2020.

he says, “Relationships are vital.”⁵⁶ Burris goes on to express that a missionary must genuinely care for co-workers from the heart, be a good listener, learn from local believers, and not always be the one who teaches or trains.⁵⁷ Hunker, Burris affirms, properly understood the importance of relationships and reflected these qualities.

Don Gardner explains that Hunker was sensitive to those in need, regardless if they were a national pastor, seminary student, missionary colleague, or local unbeliever. He writes, “Carl was a loving man who tried to make time for those in need, and that included missionaries, local Christians, and the lost. His priorities were always around people.”⁵⁸ He continues, “His language skills were never something that he was known for having. Yet, his ability to be accepted by Chinese [believers] was obvious. The point here is that he never allowed his language limitations to slow down his efforts to be involved in some sort of ministry.”⁵⁹

Hunker made himself available to those in need. One pastor comments, “Although Dr. Hunker was the president, the students did not feel like there was a distance between the students and the president. Whenever the students had problems, they could go to him and ask for help.”⁶⁰ Another student adds, “Dr. Hunker was very busy, but he never rejected [someone’s] request for personal consulting or prayers. His prayers were deep to the heart and touching, and he often knelt to pray. He never forgot to show his care and consideration through daily conversations and adequate gifts.”⁶¹ Hunker’s students understood he made himself available because he cared for them.

⁵⁶ Burris, interview.

⁵⁷ Burris, interview.

⁵⁸ Don Gardner, email interview by author, March 4, 2020.

⁵⁹ Gardner, interview.

⁶⁰ Chien-Hu Li, interview.

⁶¹ Ling-Min Tsai, email interview by author, March 3, 2020.

Hunker also prioritized time with students by teaching needed courses even if they were not in his primary discipline. When there was a need, he was happy to meet it.

One student comments,

He also taught us how to preach. At the seminary, we had a course called homiletics, which is preaching. Every student was required to prepare a practice sermon for him to evaluate. We would preach, and then he would give us feedback. We felt like not even our fathers or other teachers could take his place. He was not a preaching professor; his specialty was in teaching religious studies. But, because the seminary did not have a preaching professor, Dr. Hunker offered to teach this course. He volunteered because he loved us.⁶²

Hunker prioritized time not only with his students but with their families as well. Graham comments,

[Hunker] cared for kids, even in a suit. He would play with the seminary students' kids, even in a suit and tie. He would preach in the morning, and he would preach at night, and sometimes he would preach in the afternoon somewhere else, but then when he came home, the kids knew that they could go to Dr. Hunker's house, and he would come out and play with them. He might still be in his Sunday best, wearing a suit and whatever, but he would kneel down on the ground in the dirt and play with them.⁶³

Playing with the seminary kids left an impact on the parents and the kids.⁶⁴

Hunker valued his relationships with people, believing every person was worthy of care and respect. He made time for people, and they noticed. He set an example for balancing ministry responsibilities while prioritizing relationships. He also understood the importance of relationships, and he cared deeply for people by placing their needs over tasks. In conclusion, relational priority was one way Hunker tangibly demonstrated care for his disciples and colleagues.

⁶² Kao, interview.

⁶³ Graham, interview.

⁶⁴ Graham, interview.

The Source of Hunker's Care

Hunker's disciples and colleagues perceived his care for them was an extension of his character, viewing Hunker's concern as simply a part of who he was. Burris explains, "[Hunker] truly lived out loving people. He came across as genuine with no other motive for himself."⁶⁵ Another missionary colleague, Glenda Cook, writes, "I think Carl truly loved the Taiwanese people. They were not evangelism targets or statistics. They were people, precious to God, for whom Christ died. He listened to people. He 'earned the right' to be heard by showing true concern. He was gracious, patient, and caring."⁶⁶

Graham describes Hunker by saying, "He was a man of character. He had a high character, and everything he did reflected this."⁶⁷ Hunker's character and integrity caused his students to embrace his concern for them as genuine, and they reciprocated that care in how they trusted him and allowed him to speak into their lives. My research revealed three character qualities that Hunker's disciples recognized in him. In this section, I describe Hunker's humility, servanthood, and strong work ethic, explaining how each one reinforced the belief that Hunker's care was an extension of his character.

Humility

The most common character quality interviewees express about Hunker was his humility. At Hunker's funeral service, a family friend and TBTS representative Rachel Tan, explained, "Pastor Hunker was a very humble servant: Whether he was

⁶⁵ Burris, interview.

⁶⁶ Glenda Cook, email interview by author, March 14, 2020. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

⁶⁷ Graham, interview.

preaching or caring for the brothers and sisters of the church, everyone around him could see he was genuine and honest.”⁶⁸

Likewise, Phillips expresses that Hunker’s humility separated him from others, explaining, “He loved the Chinese. He was probably one of the best-loved missionaries in Southern Baptist work. He just was a very humble person. He was always willing to put someone ahead of him.”⁶⁹ Tsai agrees, sharing, “He was very humble; he cared for people.”⁷⁰

Another colleague explains, “Even though he had great respect and as a teacher could demand many privileges, he was very humble and open. He made jokes about himself. When invited to speak in a church down island, he would often stay in the home of the pastor and his family. Any pastor could talk to him and get to know him.”⁷¹ Hunker’s humility and sense of humor drew people to him. Many of the interviewees express how Hunker’s humor demonstrated his humility and set him apart from other missionaries.⁷² Hunker’s disciples and colleagues understand his humor to be a reflection of his humility.⁷³

Hunker’s humility invited pastors to trust him. They opened their lives to him and trusted the counsel he provided. One colleague notes that her favorite memory of Hunker was observing him “interact, with love and humility, with Chinese convention

⁶⁸ Rachel Tan, “Carl Hunker Memorial Service at Emmanuel Chinese Baptist Church in Kansas City,” January 23, 2016, DVD, 1:03:08.

⁶⁹ Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

⁷⁰ Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

⁷¹ Ron West, email interview by author, March 16, 2020.

⁷² Hunker is famous for telling a joke about his wife, referring to her as his “*xiao tai tai*” because she was much shorter than he. The term literally means “small wife.” However, in Chinese, “*xiao tai tai*” means second wife.

⁷³ Chien-Hu Li, interview; Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

leaders, seminary students, church members and the lost Taiwanese.”⁷⁴ Hunker’s humility allowed him to build meaningful relationships with others.

Hogue comments that growing up during the Great Depression prepared Hunker for ministry in Taiwan in the early 1950s. He expresses, “He was very frugal, like many Chinese at that time.”⁷⁵ Hogue believes God used Hunker’s humble upbringing to help him better minister to the Chinese people, many of whom left everything behind in the mainland when they migrated to Taiwan at the end of the Chinese Civil War.

Servanthood

Hunker’s humility influenced his leadership style. Hunker sought to be a servant-leader, setting an example that leaders are to lead by serving those in their care, as Christ did.⁷⁶ Ron Winstead speaks to Hunker’s leadership style, noting how it differed from Culpepper Sr., and how the Chinese people received it. He explains,

The Chinese Baptists had great respect for all the missionaries who came to Taiwan after leaving the mainland. In the early 50s, Charles Culpepper Sr. was the main spiritual leader, but when Charles retired, Carl became the spiritual leader for both the convention and the Mission. Culpepper had been a very vocal and commanding leader for both the convention and the Mission, but Carl was just the opposite. The Chinese recognized a quiet wisdom in Carl that was closer to the Confucian model.⁷⁷

Hunker presented a quiet leadership style that set an example for many.⁷⁸

Tseng agrees that Hunker demonstrated servanthood in the way he led the seminary as well. He says, “Dr. Hunker would sometimes kneel in faculty meetings and

⁷⁴ Cook, interview.

⁷⁵ Hogue, interview.

⁷⁶ Nien, interview.

⁷⁷ Ron Winstead, email interview by author, March 4, 2020.

⁷⁸ Winstead, interview.

wash the feet of the faculty members.”⁷⁹ Commenting on Hunker’s spiritual leadership at the seminary, Phillips concurs, adding, “He was loved by the Chinese very, very much, and I think that was because of the servant spirit that he had.”⁸⁰ Hunker was a quiet leader who used his office and influence to serve others.

Strong Work Ethic

The third quality my interviews revealed about Hunker was his strong work ethic. Hunker was a hard worker, and his students noticed. One former student comments, “Dr. Hunker arrived at the office at 6am every day for a variety of responsibilities, such as his daily devotion, counseling students, readings, and praying with students. He would go home for meals but always returned to the office promptly. To be accurate, he worked from 6am to 10pm with diligence.”⁸¹ Xue recalls,

There are several things that I recall from that time. Dr. Hunker had a very great influence on me. Dr. Hunker was a very busy person, but every morning at 6:00, he would find a student to pray and do the morning devotion with him. This [commitment] was the first thing that I noticed because he emphasized our spiritual growth very much.⁸²

Hunker routinely impacted students.

Xue continues explaining that Hunker influenced him in many ways, and one of those was his strong work ethic: “[Hunker] was very efficient with his time. What I mean is that Dr. Hunker was a very busy person. He was busy with the mission board, [Amoy Street Baptist Church (ASBC)], the seminary. He was very busy but very efficient

⁷⁹ Tseng, interview.

⁸⁰ Phillips, interview.

⁸¹ Wang, interview.

⁸² Xue, interview.

in terms of management.”⁸³ Hunker managed his time well, seeking to maximize each day.

Hunker expected his students to work hard, too. One student shares Hunker’s instruction for students, especially those serving as pastors. She explains, “Dr. Hunker would say, ‘Most people start work at 9 o’clock, but we work for God, so we should be more diligent than other people. So, if your office hour starts at 9 o’clock then you should be in the office before 8:30 so when people pass by your office, they would say, ‘Oh, the pastor’s already there,’ and it would touch them.”⁸⁴

His colleagues noticed his work ethic, as well. One colleague explains,

The nationals knew that he and his wife were committed to the Lord, His work, and them. They knew he was available to help as needed. They knew he was not one to waste time as he was very focused: deep prayer life, long office hours, evangelizing all over the island. They knew that he held himself and them to the highest Biblical standards but did so with love.⁸⁵

Hunker’s love for God and people motivated him to work hard.

Hunker’s character and integrity caused his students to embrace his concern for them as genuine. Hunker’s humility, servanthood, and work ethic reinforced the belief that his care was an extension of his character. Hunker’s disciples trusted his character, and that trust enabled Hunker to speak into the lives of his students.

The Impact of Hunker’s Care

Hunker’s care for his students set an example they imitated. One pastor comments, “From Dr. Hunker’s example and being a pastor [myself], I should be concerned and care for those around me. Each time I have a chance, I will give this type

⁸³ Xue, interview. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

⁸⁴ Ai-Hua Li, interview.

⁸⁵ Weber, interview.

of blessing to others.”⁸⁶ Hunker’s care for others demonstrated the love of God and provided a model worth following.

Tseng comments that he trusted Hunker completely as a young seminary student because he (i.e., Hunker) presented a life-model worth imitating.⁸⁷ Tseng goes on to share how he modeled his care for others after Hunker’s example. When asked if Hunker instructed him to care for others the way Hunker cared for him, Tseng says reciprocating Hunker’s example just came naturally. Hunker did not tell his disciples to imitate his model; he did not have to. Because Hunker’s model met a need in the students’ lives, they naturally cared for others the way Hunker cared for them.⁸⁸

Hunker was a genuinely humble person, and he cared for those entrusted to him. He cared well for people and pointed them to Christ, making Christ the example, not himself. Nien shares, “Once [the students] asked Dr. Hunker for a picture to keep as a memorial. However, instead of giving students his own photo, he gave each student a picture of Jesus. He hoped students would learn to be like Jesus, follow Jesus’ footsteps, and follow the example Jesus set, instead of following him.”⁸⁹ Hunker’s exemplary care was focused on people, expressed in tangible ways, linked to his character, and imitated by others.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to demonstrate how Hunker’s care for people influenced the life and history of Taiwan Baptists. In each interview, I asked the question

⁸⁶ Yen-Chen Peng, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 5, 2020.

⁸⁷ Tseng, interview.

⁸⁸ Tseng, interview.

⁸⁹ Nien, interview.

“How did Hunker demonstrate care for people?” By asking this question, four elements concerning his care for people came to light.

First, my research revealed the focus of Hunker’s care. Hunker cared about people’s personal spiritual lives, their families, and their churches. The second element that came to light was how Hunker expressed his care. His disciples and missionary colleagues did not feel like ministry projects or tasks; they knew Hunker genuinely cared about who they were and how they were doing. Third, my research revealed how many of his disciples made the connection between Hunker’s genuine care for them and his character. The last element my research revealed was how Hunker’s disciples imitated his care by caring for others the way he cared for them. In the next chapter, I show how Hunker’s passion for the lost further influenced the life and history of Taiwan Baptists.

CHAPTER 4

HUNKER'S PASSION FOR THE LOST

Carl Hunker was a natural evangelist who loved telling people about Jesus. Even going back to his early days in ministry, Hunker cared about evangelism, citing the emphasis on evangelism and missions as one of the reasons he pursued his theological education at a Southern Baptist seminary.¹ One of his former students shares, “Dr. Hunker put much emphasis on cross-cultural missions, but the greatest impact he had on me was his life, especially the responsibility and burden he felt for the souls of the Chinese people.”² Hunker’s passion for evangelism influenced others.

Another student writes, “Pastor Hunker was not afraid of difficulties. He dedicated his life to evangelizing the Chinese people, even in retirement, until he was very old and entered a nursing home.”³ Another disciple expresses, “He was always passionate in delivering the gospel all the time. Whenever, wherever he had the opportunity to share the gospel in person, or on the stage to the public, he was always faithful to his calling from the LORD.”⁴ Hunker was passionate about reaching people with the gospel, and he instilled that same passion in a generation of pastors, convention leaders, seminary administrators, and cross-cultural missionaries.⁵

¹ Faye Pearson, *Taiwan Connections: Fond Memories* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2009), 43.

² Huai-Su Chuang, interview by author, Taoyuan, Taiwan, March 20, 2020.

³ Shou-Sui Chen, email interview by author, March 13, 2020.

⁴ Ling-Min Tsai, email interview by author, March 3, 2020.

⁵ Ching-En Tseng, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 12, 2020; Chuang, interview.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how Hunker's passion for the lost influenced the life of Taiwan Baptists. In each interview, I asked the question "How did Hunker demonstrate a passion for the lost?" Consequently, I understood Hunker's passion for evangelism in five ways.

First, I observed Hunker's passion for reaching people. Hunker believed a person's greatest need was the gospel. He did not care about race, socio-economic background, or education level; he just wanted to make Christ known.

Second, throughout the interviews and by examining Hunker's writings, I observed his passion for reaching Taiwan with the gospel. Although Taiwan had a great zeal for the gospel when he first arrived, conversion rates slowed over time.⁶ He knew saturating Taiwan island with the gospel would require his setting an example, training others, and establishing a convention for cooperation among the Baptist churches.

Third, Hunker believed Taiwan Baptists were the best positioned to engage Mainland China with the gospel. He expected the mainland to reopen in his lifetime, and he wanted Taiwan Baptist churches and American Baptist churches to be ready. Referring to Taiwan as an "isle of hope," he called on Taiwan Baptists to be ready to "speak the Christian message of hope."⁷

Fourth, Hunker believed that the Chinese had a responsibility to reach their own no matter where they lived in the world. Hunker estimated there were eighteen million Chinese living outside Mainland China, and he called on Taiwan Baptists to make

⁶ Carl Hunker and Jeanette Hunker, "Christmas Letter," 1975, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁷ Carl Hunker, "Formosa: Isle of Hope," Carl Hunker Collection, SBHLA.

Taiwan a missions-sending epicenter to engage the Chinese diaspora.⁸ Hunker defined Taiwan Christians' "unfinished task" in terms of evangelizing all Chinese.⁹

Finally, Hunker demonstrated his passion for evangelism in how he contextualized the gospel. He believed the job of the evangelist included knowing the cultural and religious worldview of the person with whom one is sharing. He understood how Confucian values influenced the Chinese worldview, and he used Bible stories that resonated with the Chinese worldview to communicate the gospel to his Chinese listeners.

For People

In his 1980 annual report, Hunker wrote, "No experience can quite meet the joy of leading someone to the Lord for personal salvation."¹⁰ Answering the question "What did your dad care most about?" Hunker's son, David, explains, "Well, I think he cared most about missions, for one thing, reaching people for Jesus."¹¹ David goes on to tell a story of Hunker's first arriving in China: "In 1946, as soon as he got off the boat after landing in China, he ran down the gangplank and saw a [worker] there and said [in English], 'do you know Jesus?' Which seems sort of odd to me, but that was very much who he was. He was not ashamed of the gospel."¹² Hunker loved sharing Christ and leading people to faith.

One of Hunker's missionary colleagues explains, "He was a soul winner who witnessed individually and would go anywhere to preach the gospel. He could

⁸ W. Carl Hunker, *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1970), 116–17.

⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 121.

¹⁰ Carl Hunker, "Personal Report," December 1980, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

¹¹ David Hunker, email interview by author, February 29, 2020.

¹² David Hunker, interview.

communicate to the educated and the uneducated in a humble and direct manner. He was gentle and kind to everyone.”¹³ His family agrees with the assessment that he could talk with anyone. His son explains, “He was very smart, and so he was able to connect with students intellectually as well as spiritually. . . . He never met a stranger, and he was able to relate to people of all age groups.”¹⁴ David goes on to say that even when his dad was eighty years old, he was still taking junior high kids to summer camp.

Hunker had the unique ability to relate to all people, regardless of age or race. One former student expresses,

I think that Dr. Hunker went into the crowds despite their race. Despite their skin color, he loved people. What I want to emphasize is that all the missionaries I know are very good and very faithful, but Dr. Hunker was special in that he [also] worked with Hakkas and with the original tribes of Taiwan. Dr. Hunker did mission work among all the different ethnic groups in Taiwan.¹⁵

Another student recounts his first interaction with Hunker.¹⁶ The student, who has since planted five churches in Taiwan, was in middle school and a member of a rural Baptist church in central Taiwan when he first met Hunker. He and some church members were preparing to depart the church parking lot for a day of evangelistic outreach to the Hakka people.¹⁷ They were packing their car with supplies for outreach activities when Hunker drove up in his car. Hunker introduced himself as the Baptist seminary president. He was out visiting the rural Baptist churches of central Taiwan. After hearing they were going to spend the day ministering in Hakka villages, Hunker asked if he could go with them and help transport supplies. Hunker did not speak the

¹³ Ron West, email interview by author, March 16, 2020.

¹⁴ David Hunker, interview.

¹⁵ Chin-Kuei Chung, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 23, 2020.

¹⁶ Chuang, interview.

¹⁷ The Hakka are one of the people groups in Taiwan who migrated from Mainland China. For more on Hunker’s ministering to the Hakka, see Hunker, *Taiwan*, 42.

Hakka language or know any of the church members, yet he joined them and began a lifelong friendship with the student. He simply saw a need he could meet, and he met it.

Hunker believed a person's greatest need was the gospel. Hunker's son once asked him if he had considered signing up to serve in the military during World War II, for Hunker was a seminary student during the war. David explains,

One thing that I asked him once because he was of draft age in World War II and Oz Quick, you know, served as a chaplain. And so, I asked dad once why he had not signed up for the army or the armed forces, and he said that he and his fellow students believed that what they were doing at seminary was more important than anything else in the world.¹⁸

Hunker believed world peace would be a result of the gospel's changing lives. He stayed in seminary, believing the most effective use of his time was training as a cross-cultural missionary who could take the gospel to the nations.

On Hunker's Foreign Mission Board (FMB) application for missionary service in 1945, he answered a question that asked "Which of the following best express your aim in going as a missionary?" He chose from the following options: "to hasten Christ's second coming," "to save some souls' from death," "to establish churches," "to teach the Christian principle of love," "to share in a spiritual quest," "to make Christ known," "to provide a higher standard of living," "to create a Christian world order," "to preach the gospel," or "to share our American way of life." He marked "to make Christ known."¹⁹ When asked on the same form "What is your missionary purpose?" he answered, "To make Christ known, resulting in the salvation of individuals, the creation of societies with a Christian bias if not fully Christian, and ultimately the creation of a world which does not know war because men are at peace with God and with one another."²⁰

¹⁸ David Hunker, interview.

¹⁹ Carl Hunker, "FMB Missionary Application," Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

²⁰ Hunker, "FMB Missionary Application."

Hunker's passion for reaching people with the gospel impacted his missionary colleagues, too. One of his colleagues notes, "He was always evangelistic in his sermons, and he encouraged his students to be involved in personal witnessing. So, I think it was just a part of him. I think Carl Hunker lived out his theology more than any other missionary or any other person that I have ever known. It was just all part of his life, and it seemed so natural to him."²¹ Hunker understood his gospel witness impacted every area of his life.

Living on a seminary campus made evangelism more difficult for Hunker. He had to give extra effort to engage the lost. In a personal letter to a friend in 1981, Hunker detailed, "Always we want to keep emphasizing personal soul winning. One reason that I try to keep involved as an interim pastor of churches is to keep me closer in touch with the unsaved. Seminary involvement does not permit me to have daily contact with non-Christians."²² Hunker made an intentional effort to impact lostness.

Hunker understood the responsibility all believers had to share the gospel and give all people the opportunity to repent and follow Jesus. He reflected, "Because people everywhere are our brothers, they are our responsibility. Not until everyone, everywhere, has been given the right for [the] fullest development of his whole personality in terms of the Christian gospel is our task achieved."²³ The task, as Hunker defined it, was for every person everywhere to know and follow Christ, and it was Christians' job to take the gospel to every person.

²¹ Linda Phillips, telephone interview by author, March 13, 2020.

²² Carl Hunker, "Letter to George Hays," February 21, 1981, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

²³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 120.

For Taiwan

Hunker had a passion for reaching all people with the gospel, and he demonstrated this desire over a thirty-four-year missionary career in Taiwan. Hunker first visited Taiwan in 1951 for a brief period, at which time he witnessed a hunger for the gospel he had never seen.²⁴ When he returned in 1952, he experienced that same zeal from the Chinese for the gospel. He reflected,

History teaches that national crises often prepare people spiritually and psychologically for the acceptance of new ideas and concepts. In China, this was true. The nationwide upheaval prepared the soil for sowing the seeds of the gospel. Many factors were at work, among them deep grief and loneliness, and separation from family, friends, and familiar places. The intimate family-like fellowship and mutual personal concern of small Christian gatherings filled this void for many homesick Chinese.²⁵

Radical change softened people's hearts, causing them to be more open to new spiritual ideas, but it was the warmth of Christian fellowship that filled the void of loneliness. Hunker detailed,

Because of war's destruction, many families abandoned their ancestral gods while still on the mainland. People in flight carry only minimum personal belongings, and household gods were not among these. Old community temples were left behind. Only the very devout found temples in new communities appealing. Young people, especially, were "idol-less," and many became liberal thinkers, indifferent to old superstitious beliefs and unacquainted with the true God.²⁶

While the radical changes opened people's minds to new spiritual ideas, it was also the absence of household gods that allowed many to start anew. Due to a tumultuous few years of moving and resettling, as well as leaving behind household gods and superstitious beliefs, many were ready to hear and receive the gospel.

The early years of Baptist work in Taiwan resulted in strong numeric growth. Hunker wrote, "Within four years, the Baptist membership had multiplied six-fold;

²⁴ Carl Hunker, "Letter to Friends," May 1, 1951, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

²⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 15.

²⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 15.

within five years it had multiplied another threefold, a truly phenomenal growth.”²⁷

However, after fifteen years of fertile evangelistic soil, the hearts of the Chinese became more resistant to the gospel. Hunker explained,

Change and development are challenging Baptist churches to discover new ways and means of evangelism. Admittedly, the heart of evangelism is the individual Christian and the local church. But economic and industrial progress has given birth to rampant materialism. Political security has spawned religious apathy. Without gifted leaders who have vision of new approaches, Christianity will be unable to penetrate the shell of resistance in a new China.²⁸

Here, Hunker is describing the need for new indigenous leadership who can present new approaches for reaching and discipling new converts into the churches.

However, change in the churches was too slow, and the church did not keep up with the booming population. Hunker detailed,

Christ’s courageous minority faces a task of staggering proportions. New approaches strengthen traditional methods. But there are ominous signs that it is far too slow. Conversions have not kept pace with the rapid increase in population. Today more non-Christians live on Taiwan than when Baptists first began their witness more than twenty years ago.²⁹

As conversion rates slowed and the disparity between believers and non-believers widened, missionaries knew something needed to change.

FMB’s church-planting strategy during Hunker’s time included buying land, building a church building, training leaders through the seminary, and equipping church members to conduct local evangelism.³⁰ Hunker knew the individual efforts of the foreign missionaries would not be enough to reach Taiwan for Christ.³¹ He and other

²⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 21. In a 1955 report, Hunker documented that CBC membership included fourteen churches, twenty-four chapels, and 3,835 members. See Carl Hunker, “Because He First Loved Us,” November 12, 1955, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

²⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 59.

²⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 67.

³⁰ Chen-Kuang Chang, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 24, 2020.

³¹ Hunker, “Formosa.”

missionaries knew they must give more emphasis to training indigenous evangelists if they were going to reach Taiwan, and that emphasis began with their setting an example. In the following sub-sections, I demonstrate how Hunker set an example for evangelism among Taiwan Baptist leaders, trained a generation of evangelists, and helped establish a convention for the sake of evangelizing the island. In so doing, Hunker maximized his evangelistic efforts in Taiwan.

He Set the Example

Hunker set an example of personal evangelism for his disciples not because he felt an obligation but because it came naturally for him as one who loved sharing the gospel with others. One former student writes,

Dr. Carl Hunker's devotion and enthusiasm for evangelism were evident to all. He was deeply concerned about the salvation of those around him. As long as he found an opportunity, he always remembered to invite people to know Jesus and shared the gospel with non-believers. If someone accepted Jesus as his or her personal Savior, he would be overjoyed. Moreover, he always asked us to pray for non-believers, which even included the non-believing workers in the seminary. He reminded us to pray for their salvation and the courage of ourselves to share the gospel with them. Dr. Hunker's commitment to sharing the gospel was admiring.³²

Hunker's commitment to sharing the gospel and praying for non-believers inspired others.

Hunker's missionary colleagues noticed, too. Debbie Weber accompanied Hunker on many weekend revival services. She writes,

I was blessed to team with him on several missionary-led revivals around the island. He preached; I played the piano and sometimes did a choir workshop. When he preached, he poured out God's love on the listeners. He prayed with great passion for the churches and the lost. He encouraged them to reach beyond themselves into the communities. He personally led people to Christ.³³

³² Chuan-Lin Chang, email interview by author, March 21, 2020. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

³³ Debbie Weber, email interview by author, March 11, 2020.

Weekend revival services were common for Hunker, who saw revival services not only as times to share the gospel but also as opportunities to encourage former students and support young church plants.

Regarding Hunker's personal witnessing style, one colleague explains that Hunker liked to share his testimony when sharing the gospel:

Dr. Hunker preached a very simple gospel message, always using a familiar story from the life of Jesus and often sharing his testimony of how and why he became a Christian. Chinese often had a hard time hearing him because his voice was not that strong. He [emphasized] love and heaven rather than hell and Satan. Modern evangelists would not judge his preaching dynamic, but it was with the power of the Holy Spirit. He was meek and mild, just as Jesus must have been. He often wept while praying and preaching.³⁴

Hunker relied on the power of the message and not himself.

Further, Hunker was not alone in setting the example. One retired pastor recalls,

I think that missionaries of Dr. Hunker's generation were very remarkable. They were enthusiastic about evangelism, built many churches, and trained many evangelists. They did evangelism everywhere, and they had good foresight for important locations. Baptist churches are now in many important districts because the missionaries of Hunker's day were very precise, and they knew the geographical locations very well.³⁵

Hunker's generation of missionaries understood the need to set the example for personal evangelism as well as the importance of training others. Chuang Huai-Su explains, "[Hunker] taught me to put my focus on missions, evangelism, and church planting. . . . The missionaries' example of sacrifice and their dedication to the Lord in spreading the gospel still has a profound influence on my life today."³⁶ Hunker, along with his

³⁴ Ron Winstead, email interview by author, March 7, 2020.

³⁵ Ming-Guang Xue, telephone interview by author, March 25, 2020. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

³⁶ Chuang, interview. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

colleagues, emphasized evangelism and missions, and he instilled those same values in others, impacting a generation of leaders.³⁷

He Trained Others

Hunker believed every believer shared the responsibility to reach the lost. His daughter explains that “his passion for the gospel was great,” and that same passion motivated him to train leaders who were also passionate about sharing the gospel.³⁸ One of his former students summarizes this sentiment by saying, “He used his life to nurture students, to train students to become committed evangelists.”³⁹ Another student says, “[Hunker] encouraged us to work hard for the sake of evangelism and to spread the gospel to those who need the grace of God’s salvation.”⁴⁰

Because of Hunker’s belief that all believers shared the responsibility to evangelize the lost, he never thought it was too early to train new believers to share their new faith. One colleague explains, “[Scripture] commands [us] to make disciples, and the new believer training material that [Hunker] wrote shows how important he saw helping new believers [learn to] share their faith as soon as possible.”⁴¹ Hunker also believed it was never too late to learn to evangelize.

Lin Duan, who was a church member of Amoy Street Baptist Church (ASBC) during Hunker’s time, explains how Hunker instructed him to consider himself a missionary wherever he was so that he could minister to those with whom he worked. Lin sensed God’s calling to be more involved in ministry, but he served in the military; thus, attending seminary was not possible for him. In 1973, Lin sought counsel from Hunker.

³⁷ Xue, interview.

³⁸ Joyce Lynn Maslin, email interview by author, February 29, 2020.

³⁹ Bih-Feng Nien, email interview by author, March 31, 2020.

⁴⁰ Nien, interview.

⁴¹ Robert Burriss, email interview by author, March 5, 2020.

Hunker told him that anyone who devoted himself to God is now an evangelist. Lin recalls, “Every Christian should be an evangelist because our whole life mission is to preach to everyone. So, he asked me to be a witness in the army. I was inspired by how much he cared about the unbeliever.”⁴²

Many interviewees express Hunker’s intentions to train others to share the gospel, but one statement stands out above the others. A former professor and church member under Hunker’s pastoral leadership says, “One of the traditions that Dr. Hunker established is that he keeps telling us over and over: the purpose of the church is evangelism—to spread the gospel to people. So, while he was president of the seminary, he also taught the students that [they] should do [their] best to spread the gospel.”⁴³

Hunker believed the seminary was the number one contributor to evangelism. He posited, “Probably no feature of Baptist work in Taiwan has contributed to evangelism more than the Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary. It has produced young preachers and church leaders who have filled a vital role in meeting this opportunity.”⁴⁴ Hunker’s passion for evangelism and his theology of the church’s mandate to evangelize the lost influenced a generation of pastors and convention leaders.

To train students to share, he would take them with him when he made house visits. One time, Hunker took a group of students with him to visit a lady who was sick and needed prayer. The woman they visited became angry and started cursing and calling everyone degrading names. Afterward, Hunker told the students, “Today we were humiliated because of the name of Jesus; we should feel grateful.”⁴⁵ Evangelism was not easy, and yet Hunker committed to helping local leaders develop as evangelists.

⁴² Duan Lin, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020.

⁴³ Te-Jen Ke, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 18, 2020.

⁴⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 123.

⁴⁵ Ai-Hua Li, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 10, 2020.

Finally, Hunker knew that honoring family members, especially the parents of those who recently came to faith, would be an important step in helping non-believing family members accept the gospel. One disciple explains how Hunker would counsel new believers whose family members rejected their new faith in Christ:

Dr. Hunker would not encourage extreme measures. For example, he would not tell a person to ignore their family and just receive baptism. Rather, he would tell them to be patient with their family and let their family members know that because [he or she] was a new person, [he or she] has changed. For example, I was the first Christian in my family, and [my family] has five siblings, but my parents did not oppose me being a Christian because I let them see the change in me. So, my parents gradually agreed to my baptism.⁴⁶

Hunker knew that training believers to share the gospel was important, but they also needed encouragement when they came to faith. He equipped disciples with the ability to share the gospel and taught them how to seek the salvation of their family members as well.

He Established a Convention

Hunker set an example for evangelism and trained many to evangelize, but he also helped establish a Baptist convention to extend the churches' gospel witness. Driven by a desire among Taiwan Baptists for "all of Taiwan to know Christ," Baptist missionaries made plans in 1953 to form the Chinese Baptist Convention (CBC).⁴⁷ The purpose of the convention was clear: "cooperation for responsible evangelism."⁴⁸ More broadly stated, Hunker explained the purpose of the convention in the following way: "The convention has a threefold purpose: cooperation in strengthening the local church; cooperation in the mission of evangelizing their nation; and cooperation in worldwide

⁴⁶ Ke, interview.

⁴⁷ Carl Hunker, "Email to Linda Phillips," April 2, 2004, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

⁴⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 113.

evangelism.”⁴⁹ Cooperation for the sake of evangelism and missions was at the heart of what Hunker believed it meant to be Baptist. He and others saw the need and worked tirelessly to establish an indigenous convention in Taiwan that could reach Taiwan.

After years of prayer, hard work, development, and training, Hunker was encouraged to see that gospel responsiveness was again increasing in 1970, after declining the previous fifteen years.⁵⁰ Hunker knew it would take a generation of evangelists to saturate Taiwan with the gospel, and he committed his life to equip Chinese pastors, leaders, and church members to proclaim the hope of Christ. He commented,

Simply stated, responsible evangelism defines the task. While missionaries open the doors of evangelism in a new land, it is the national Christians who must bear the continuing burden of evangelization, which includes the personal witness of laypeople. It also means youth responding to the need for national pastors. Again, it means total mobilization of Christian resources in cooperative evangelism. Taiwan Baptists are cooperating now through a seminary and a convention in a brave beginning to achieve the ultimate goals of evangelism.⁵¹

Hunker’s commitment to evangelism manifested in his efforts to raise a generation of indigenous evangelists to saturate the island in responsible evangelism through the Baptist convention.

For Mainland China

Hunker had a passion not only for Taiwan but also for reengaging the mainland with the gospel. When he arrived in Taiwan in 1952, the Chinese people there believed they would one day reengage and retake the mainland.⁵² General Chiang Kai-Shek and

⁴⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 114.

⁵⁰ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” October 10, 1970, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁵¹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 109. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

⁵² For a history of Christianity in Taiwan, see Hollington K. Tong, *Christianity in Taiwan: A History* (Taipei: China Post, 1961); Murray A. Rubinstein, *The Protestant Community on Modern Taiwan: Mission, Seminary, and Church* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1991).

the Han people who retreated from the mainland with him believed the Republic of China (ROC) government was the legitimate government of all of China and that the newly appointed People's Republic of China (PRC) government, led by Chairman Mao, was a renegade government that had illegally taken the country.⁵³

In his book *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution*, Hunker referred to the sentiment of reengaging the mainland as an “unfinished revolution.”⁵⁴ Hunker wrote the book in 1970, one year before the United Nations removed Taiwan's government as the recognized representative of Mainland China.⁵⁵ Taiwan's unfinished revolution was to retake the mainland and reestablish the Republic of China's government as the legitimate government of the Chinese people. However, Hunker knew that while the ultimate goal of the ROC government was to reestablish control over the mainland, the ultimate goal of the church was different. He reflected,

For the church, the goals of the contemporary revolution are deeper than political change, economic progress, agricultural reform, and educational opportunity. Regeneration is the measure of total victory in the revolution. The wholeness of personality and wholesomeness of society are dependent upon a vertical relationship with God. Christians face the task of leading men to become sons of God, and thus to become true brothers, brothers in Christ.⁵⁶

Hunker believed Taiwan was a unique and strategic place not only because of the spiritual needs of the island but also due to the deep-rooted belief that Free China is responsible for reaching all Chinese with the gospel.⁵⁷

⁵³ Henry Kissinger, *On China* (New York: Penguin Press, 2011), 151.

⁵⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 121.

⁵⁵ Murray A. Rubinstein, “Political Taiwanization and Pragmatic Diplomacy: The Eras of Chiang Ching-Kuo and Lee Teng-Hui, 1971–1994,” in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. Murray A. Rubinstein, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 438.

⁵⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 109. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

⁵⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, vi. The term “Free China” refers to Taiwan due to their political freedom.

In this way, Hunker applied William Carey’s “concentration-and-diffusion” principle in Taiwan and, more specifically, in Taipei.⁵⁸ The purpose of Hunker’s book was to highlight the strategic position Taiwan Baptists were in to reengage Mainland China. He contended,

This book seeks to challenge Christians everywhere to today’s opportunity: Christian witness among the Chinese. In comparison to the mainland’s 750 million, Taiwan’s few million may seem small. Yet it must not be regarded as a small opportunity, for its population is larger than each of the forty-eight of America’s states. The average age of its people is young, so its future is latent with possibility. Christians have good reason to respond with maximum effort. Today’s investment will produce tomorrow’s witness among the Chinese, even on the mainland, when the Bamboo Curtain is removed.⁵⁹

Hunker’s argument was simple: concentrate on Taiwan and mobilize the Taiwanese Baptist people, who are inherently motivated, to reach the mainland when it reopens.

In the same way that Carey concentrated on Serampore and mobilized indigenous evangelists, pastors, and teachers to wider-reaching areas, Hunker concentrated on training Taiwan Baptist leaders through his ministry in Taipei.⁶⁰ Hunker wrote,

Missionaries are the first to realize that the task of evangelizing China on that day is far beyond the limited power of a small missionary staff. The task of winning Formosa to Christ not only looks to the present urgent need, but it also looks to the future and winning of China to Christ. Today is the day in Formosa for the forces of Christianity! Formosa is strategic! It is an isle of hope to the peoples of all the world, to those of the East and the West alike. It must be prepared to speak the Christian message of hope.⁶¹

For Hunker, ministry in Taiwan was not an end in itself. He prepared Taiwan Baptists to be ready to engage the mainland with the gospel.

⁵⁸ Carl Hunker, “The Influence of William Carey on the Principles of Subsequent Missions” (ThD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1946), 140.

⁵⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, vi.

⁶⁰ Hunker, “The Influence of William Carey,” 140. For more on Carey’s Legacy, see Ruth A. Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 127.

⁶¹ Hunker, “Formosa.”

Regarding mobilizing Taiwan Baptists to take the gospel to China, Linda Phillips expresses, “I think that was his heart’s desire. He saw that the Chinese did not have the language barrier that we missionaries had. . . . However, he did not encourage his students to think about foreign missions other than Chinese. He always said, if the Chinese in Taiwan can reach the Chinese, then we Americans can do the rest.”⁶²

Hunker believed Taiwan would play a significant role in reaching China with the gospel. Ke Te-Jen says, “He hoped that the churches in Taiwan could grow strong so that when China Mainland reopens, we would be ready. While there was hope that someday China would reopen and we would have a chance to spread the gospel there, that hope dimmed.”⁶³ Ke contends, though, that Hunker never lost hope that China would reopen, even after the United Nations replaced the ROC government with the PRC government as the sole representative of China.

For the Chinese Diaspora

Hunker had a passion for reaching Taiwan and reengaging Mainland China, but he also had a passion for reaching the Chinese diaspora. Hunker emphasized that Taiwan was the doorway for missions to the Chinese diaspora. Even though Taiwan was in a vulnerable state due to political and economic pressures, Hunker cast a vision for missions and rallied students to pray with him for the day when Taiwan would be a missions-sending center.⁶⁴

In the same way Hunker applied Carey’s concentration-and-diffusion principle for reengaging Mainland China, he also mobilized Taiwan Baptists to engage the nations,

⁶² Phillips, interview.

⁶³ Ke, interview.

⁶⁴ Rei-Yi Tsai, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020.

beginning with the eighteen million Chinese living outside of the mainland.⁶⁵ The convention was central to Hunker's plan to send missionaries. He detailed,

Another expression of convention concern is a program of foreign missions. The young convention is not content with responsible discipleship for Taiwan only. It has sent its missionaries to work among overseas Chinese in other nations of the Orient. In December of each year during the same week in which Southern Baptist churches observe a Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, Taiwan Baptist churches are united in an identical effort. Generous offerings demonstrate committed concern. Some of the money goes to Richmond, Virginia, for world-wide Baptist missions. A large portion is for the support of Taiwan's own foreign missionaries. One missionary has gone to Bangkok, Thailand. Others have gone to Malaysia. An encouraging work started among the Chinese in Korea.⁶⁶

Hunker saw the need to send missionaries to all people; yet, he primarily focused his efforts on reaching the Chinese, even in foreign contexts.

Expressing his conviction that Taiwan Baptists have a responsibility to reach Chinese people throughout the world, Hunker noted,

For new Chinese Christians today, "All men of the four seas are brothers." Brothers are responsible for brothers. Taiwan's Baptists feel a special responsibility for the eighteen million Chinese who live outside of China. Felt just as keenly, is a responsibility for their "same family members" on the mainland of China. They have the same culture, background, and language. Who in all the world is best prepared to go to them? Baptists in Taiwan know God's truth and feel their obligation.⁶⁷

Hunker believed the best way to leverage the responsibility Taiwan Baptists felt to reach their Chinese brothers and sisters was to help them prepare to be effective evangelists.

Hunker measured victory in terms of conversion. He explained,

To Christian Chinese, the proverb, "Men of the four seas are brothers," has a double-edged relevancy. As Chinese, this concept defines their relationship to and responsibility for men of all races and nations. For them the goals of the contemporary revolution are deeper than political change, economic progress, agricultural reform, and educational opportunity. Total victory in the revolution is

⁶⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 116–17.

⁶⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 115–17. The convention sent the first CBC missionary to Bangkok, Thailand. Later, they sent families to Malaysia and Korea. For example, they sent the Lin family to Korea on October 31, 1961.

⁶⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 116–17. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

measured in terms of regeneration—wholeness of personality and wholesomeness of society dependent upon a vertical dimension of relationship to God. Christians face the task of leading men to become sons of God, and thus to become true brothers, brothers in Christ.⁶⁸

Hunker believed spiritual conversion was the ultimate goal. Economic progress and political change were necessary, but the greatest hope of mankind is the gospel.

Hunker wanted Taiwan to be the epicenter of missionary sending to engage the Chinese worldwide. He wrote his book, *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution*, for both an American and Taiwan Baptist audience. Hunker believed both groups were necessary if Taiwan was to be the epicenter of missionary sending.⁶⁹ He called on American Baptists to send more resources and on Taiwan Baptists to engage the Chinese diaspora.

For Contextualization

Hunker knew that for the Chinese to trust the gospel, they would need to receive it in a way that they could understand. Thus, Hunker committed to contextualization. He held a deep conviction that the gospel was for all people, and he demonstrated a life of careful contextualization in his evangelism. He believed the missionary evangelist should possess a deep understanding of the local cultural and religious worldview of the people, which he learned from William Carey's example.⁷⁰

Because Hunker understood the influence of Confucian thought on the Chinese people and the complexity of the local religious landscape, he was prepared to share the gospel with the Chinese. More specifically, he came to understand which biblical stories resonated with the Chinese people, and he used those stories to communicate biblical

⁶⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 109.

⁶⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 122.

⁷⁰ Hunker, "The Influence of William Carey," 181–86. See Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 2nd ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 225; A. Christopher Smith, "The Legacy of William Carey," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 16, no. 1 (January 1992): 5; Timothy George, *Faithful Witness: The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1991), 141.

truths. The story he found most helpful was the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32). The prodigal son appeals to the Chinese people due to the high relational tone of the story.⁷¹ In describing one evangelistic encounter, Hunker shared the story of a young man who came to receive Jesus. The young man shared with Hunker how the story of the prodigal son helped him understand the love of God. The student explained, “The conflict in that family made me understand my conflict with God. The father’s mercy moved me deeply, and I made a decision that night.”⁷² The parable of the prodigal son helped this person, and many others, understand the character of God.

The encounter with the young man led Hunker to realize how the story of the prodigal son “appeals in a special way to the Chinese.”⁷³ The story resonates with the Chinese because they value relationships, especially the relationship between a father and his son. In describing Confucianism, Hunker reflected,

Sensed, yet not sharply enunciated, are five relationships which guide and undergird all thought and action: (1) son to father, (2) wife to husband, (3) younger brother to older brother, (4) friend to friend, and (5) subject to ruler. In each relationship, there is a balance between obligation and authority. Learned first in the family (note the first three), these relationships extend into the wider relationships of life and become the basis of a stable society and world.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Sociologists and missiologists consider Chinese people to be shame-based people. For more on shame-based cultures, also known as honor-shame cultural paradigms, see Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside, 1946), 223; Timothy Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think about and Discuss Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 79; Eugene A. Nida, *Customs and Cultures: Anthropology for Christian Missions*, 3rd ed. (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1977), 150; Roland Muller, *The Messenger, the Message, and the Community: Three Critical Issues for the Cross-Cultural Planter* (USA: CanBooks, 2013), 110–11; Roland Muller, *Honor & Shame: Unlocking the Door* (Philadelphia: Xlibris, 2000), 16; Jayson Georges, *The 3D Gospel: Ministry in Guilt, Shame, and Fear Cultures* (USA: TimePress, 2016), 11; Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 111; Jayson Georges and Mark D. Baker, *Ministering in Honor-Shame Cultures: Biblical Foundations and Practical Essentials* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016), 19; Werner Mischke, *The Global Gospel: Achieving Missional Impact in Our Multicultural World* (Scottsdale, AZ: Mission One, 2015), 39; Jackson Wu, *One Gospel for All Nations: A Practical Approach to Biblical Contextualization* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2015), 56.

⁷² Hunker, *Taiwan*, 64.

⁷³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 64.

⁷⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 77.

Hunker knew how Confucianism prioritized a father's relationship with his son. The parable of the prodigal son magnified God's mercy and love and helped the Chinese people understand the character of God and the heart of the gospel. The gospel is highly relational, and Hunker's deep understanding of Confucianism allowed him to present the gospel with clarity without compromising biblical truth.

Further, Hunker's understanding of the symbiotic relationship between Buddhism and Daoism influenced how he shared the gospel.⁷⁵ He knew when he talked about sin and what happens after death, the local Chinese would understand those concepts through the lens of Buddhism, meaning they would try to understand the gospel in terms of rewards and punishment.⁷⁶ When he talked about the purpose of mankind and his relationship with the Creator, the same people would process that information through the lens of Daoism, meaning they would struggle to understand the concept of a personal God who knew and cared about them.⁷⁷ Knowing the local worldview helped Hunker contextualize the gospel for his audience and guard against cultural syncretism.⁷⁸

When asked how Hunker demonstrated a passion for contextualization, one interviewee responded,

Pastor Hunker taught the gospel and the truth of the Bible to different cultural entities. He used his understanding and attitude towards the local culture, and his fluent use of Chinese, to teach classes and to preach [the gospel] off-campus. Therefore, many people who accepted the gospel he preached did not think that the gospel was a cultural invasion from the outside. Instead they believed they needed to receive God's love and salvation.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Winfried Corduan provides a summary of how the three religions synthesize to influence Chinese popular religion. See Winfried Corduan, *Neighboring Faiths: An Introduction to World Religions*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 388.

⁷⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79.

⁷⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79.

⁷⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 64.

⁷⁹ Shou-Sui Chen, interview.

Hunker knew how to contextualize the gospel for the Chinese listener without compromising truth. He presented the gospel in a way that his audience could understand and respond.

Conclusion

Hunker was a natural evangelist who loved sharing the gospel. The purpose of this chapter was to demonstrate Hunker's passion for evangelism in five ways. I first demonstrated Hunker's passion for reaching people. Hunker believed a person's greatest need was for the gospel, and he loved telling people about Jesus. Second, I demonstrated his desire to reach Taiwan with the gospel. Third, I showed that Hunker believed Taiwan Baptists were the best positioned to engage Mainland China with the gospel. He expected the mainland to reopen in his lifetime, and he wanted Taiwan Baptist churches and American Baptist churches to be ready. Referring to Taiwan as an "isle of hope," he called on Taiwan Baptists to be ready to "speak the Christian message of hope."⁸⁰

Fourth, I demonstrated Hunker's passion for evangelism by showing that he believed the Chinese had a responsibility to reach their own no matter where they were in the world. To that end, he called on Taiwan Baptists to make Taiwan a missions-sending epicenter to engage the Chinese diaspora around the world. Finally, I demonstrated Hunker's passion for evangelism in how he contextualized the gospel so hearers could understand the message. He understood how cultural values influenced the Chinese worldview, and he used Bible stories that resonated with the Chinese worldview, such as the parable of the prodigal son, to communicate the gospel to his listeners. In the next chapter, I show how Hunker's understanding of culture further influenced the life and history of Taiwan Baptists.

⁸⁰ Hunker, "Formosa."

CHAPTER 5

HUNKER’S UNDERSTANDING OF CULTURE

Authors Brian M. Howell and Jenell Williams Paris define culture as the “total way of life of a group of people that is learned, adaptive, shared, and integrated.”¹ Carl Hunker was a student of culture, and he used his understanding of culture to remove cultural barriers between him and his disciples. Even during his time in Malaysia, at the age of sixty-eight, he still sought to learn more about culture in order to best share the gospel and teach biblical principles. In 1984, while teaching theological education at Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary, Hunker wrote a letter to a friend, expressing, “I will be here through the middle of November, before moving on to India. I am getting oriented to the Chinese people here in Malaysia, who are somewhat different in many customs and cultural values, so that I can be more effective in my teaching.”² The desire to know the culture of his target group did not begin at the end of Hunker’s career, however. He demonstrated a deep understanding of Chinese culture throughout the tenure of his missionary career.

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how Hunker’s understanding of culture influenced the life of Taiwan Baptists. Hunker influenced Taiwan Baptists by influencing leaders. One of the factors that contributed toward his influence on leaders was his understanding of their culture. To demonstrate this point, I divide the chapter into five sections. First, I share a few stories of how Hunker’s culture assimilation influenced

¹ Brian M. Howell and Jenell Williams Paris, *Introducing Cultural Anthropology: A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 36.

² Carl Hunker, “Letter to Martha,” August 4, 1984, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

his disciples and missionary colleagues. Second, I show how Hunker's understanding of Chinese history enabled him to comprehend the cultural worldview of the people. Third, I explain how Hunker's understanding of cultural values allowed him to foster strong relationships with students and young leaders. Fourth, I show how Hunker's understanding of the mainline religions equipped him to minister in Taiwan. Fifth, I demonstrate how Hunker's understanding of local folk religion helped him disciple a generation of Baptist ministers.

Before I continue, though, it is important to note that Hunker's understanding of culture influenced Taiwan Baptists in a different way than his care for people, passion for the lost, and commitment to indigeneity. These latter three virtues were all ways Hunker demonstrated tangible actions that *directly* impacted people. However, Hunker's understanding of culture *indirectly* impacted Taiwan Baptists. Due to Hunker's understanding of culture, he was able to participate in cultural activities, reciprocate cultural greetings, reflect cultural values, interpret cultural cues, and avoid cultural blunders. Hunker's knowledge of how to interact with the culture allowed him to remove cultural barriers and, thus, provided himself the unique ability to speak into the lives of many.

Further, Hunker's disciples had a more difficult time providing examples of his understanding of culture. Many agree that he understood their culture, but it was more difficult for them to express how they knew it, other than the fact that he felt like one of them.³ Thus, Hunker's writings better reflect his understanding of culture, while the interviews more clearly express his care for people, passion for the lost, and commitment to indigeneity. Having briefly addressed these two important caveats, I am now in a position to share a few ways Hunker's culture assimilation influenced his national disciples and missionary colleagues.

³ Hsiu-Mei Chang, interview.

Culture Assimilation

Hunker's colleagues noticed his desire to know and assimilate to Chinese culture. One colleague believes Hunker thought of himself as Chinese, explaining, "He had become so much like the Chinese. He came as close as anyone I have seen, especially in the modern era. He thought of himself as Chinese."⁴ This colleague goes on to explain that "Carl and Jeannette's intention was to be as much like the Chinese as possible."⁵ The Hunkers even dressed like the Chinese, especially Jeanette when she wore traditional Chinese dresses.⁶ One missionary comments, "He and his wife did an incredible job relating to people, and He constantly sought to learn the Chinese way and demonstrate his commitment to Chinese culture."⁷ For example, Chinese families in Taipei did not heat their homes in the winter, even though many foreigners would. The Hunkers, however, seeking to be like the Chinese, did not heat their home.⁸ They endured Taipei's cold, humid winters in the same way their national partners would.

Hunker once told Tsai Rei-Yi that he had a hard time adjusting to American culture. According to Tsai, Hunker had forgotten that he was American because he had so well adjusted to Chinese culture.⁹ Tsai goes on to say, "Hunker was humble and lived like a Chinese. His lifestyle is the same as a Chinese, and he joined the community of Chinese and actually helped them."¹⁰

⁴ LeRoy Hogue, telephone interview by author, March 3, 2020.

⁵ Hogue, interview.

⁶ Shou-Sui Chen, email interview by author, March 13, 2020.

⁷ Jim Graham, telephone interview by author, February 27, 2020; Ron Winstead, email interview by author, March 4, 2020.

⁸ See Hogue, interview; Debbie Weber, email interview by author, March 11, 2020; Chen Shou-Sui, interview.

⁹ Rei-Yi Tsai, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020.

¹⁰ Rei-Yi Tsai, email interview by author, March 1, 2020.

In addition, Chang Hsiu-Mei explains, “When I went to their house, I saw that they have Chinese furniture. It was not new—some of it was broken, and some of it had stitches. So, I knew that they loved Chinese people because their decorations reflected the Chinese style.”¹¹ Chang continues, “I think the reason that they were so successful in missionary work is because we felt that they were Chinese in their heart. . . . He is so Chinese; I did not feel like he was a foreigner, which is very important to understand about him.”¹²

Similarly, another disciple comments, “I remember that he once said to me, ‘the blood in my veins is the blood of the Chinese.’”¹³ Describing how Hunker loved Chinese culture, another disciple expresses, “If he had gone to China during the Ching dynasty, he would have had a long ponytail. In Taiwan he spoke Chinese, he did not speak English, and he ate the same food that we ate. If there was anything he did not understand about Chinese culture, he would ask us.”¹⁴ Hunker was not afraid to ask questions or make mistakes, especially when it came to language study.

According to Peng Yen-Chen, Hunker was committed to ministering in Chinese. Peng expresses, “Language is the best representation of culture, and wherever Hunker went, he always carried a Chinese Bible. I noticed that the inside of his Bible was always marked. [The markings] showed me that he had a deep commitment to language and Chinese culture.”¹⁵ Agreeing with Peng, Jim Graham explains that Hunker’s commitment to the local language allowed him to relate to people on a personal level,

¹¹ Hsiu-Mei Chang, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020.

¹² Hsiu-Mei Chang, interview.

¹³ Shou-Sui Chen, interview.

¹⁴ Ching-En Tseng, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 12, 2020.

¹⁵ Yen-Chen Peng, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 5, 2020.

“that is, to counsel them and deal with life issues on the heart level.”¹⁶ He continues, “He got to the heart level with people. The only way you can do that is by understanding culture and language.”¹⁷

While Hunker was committed to using the local language, however, he was not known for having strong language skills. One disciple comments, “To be honest, I would not say he had a talent for language learning, but he worked very hard.”¹⁸ Yet, Hunker never allowed his language limitations to keep him from doing ministry.¹⁹ His mentees’ watching him struggle through language may have caused them to appreciate him more.

Hunker not only demonstrated a good understanding of culture, but he also respected the culture and allowed it to influence him.²⁰ Linda Phillips says, “I have heard him say that he learned to pray from the Chinese—that the Chinese Christians had fervency in prayer that he did not know until he went to the mission field.”²¹ Similarly, Hunker’s daughter recalls, “He always wanted hot water. Once his Chinese friends visited him in the nursing home and they, too, asked for hot water to drink. His daughter said to the nurse, ‘See, now you know where daddy got that.’”²² Drinking hot water, even after he had returned to America, was a direct influence of the Chinese culture on him.

Hunker’s disciples more easily related to him because of his assimilation into Chinese culture. He demonstrated an interest in all aspects of culture, including history. Having briefly shared a few ways Hunker’s culture assimilation influenced his disciples,

¹⁶ Graham, interview.

¹⁷ Graham, interview.

¹⁸ Tseng, interview.

¹⁹ Don Gardner, email interview by author, March 4, 2020.

²⁰ Duan Lin, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020.

²¹ Linda Phillips, telephone interview by author, March 13, 2020.

²² Phillips, interview.

I now survey the second way Hunker demonstrated acuity concerning Chinese culture: Chinese national history.

Chinese National History

Chinese history is long and vast and goes well beyond the scope of this dissertation. Yet, Hunker demonstrated a good understanding of Chinese history in his book *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution* published in 1970.²³ At that time, he detailed a brief history of China, the discovery of Taiwan by Portuguese sailors, the Japanese occupation in Taiwan, the impact of the three million mainland refugees on Taiwan, the past and present political situation, and the different ethnicities, including the eight aboriginal tribes of Southeast Asian descent who are the oldest occupants of Taiwan island.²⁴

In describing Taiwan, Hunker wrote,

It is China. It is not as though they had fled to some foreign country with strange foods and customs. But, of the thirty-five provinces of China, only Taiwan is separated from the mainland. People of Taiwan are proud of belonging to a nation with a long and glorious history, the largest population in the world, and one of the greatest landmasses on the face of the earth. Early realizing their strategic place among the peoples of the world, the Chinese called their land the “middle kingdom.” In English, the West has given it the name of China, approaching in sound the name of the short-lived but important Ch’in dynasty of 221–207 B.C. . . . This is China today. Taiwan is Free China, the temporary seat of the “Republic of China” government under the leadership of President Chiang Kai-Shek.²⁵

Here, Hunker explained Taiwan in relation to Mainland China. The three million Chinese mainlanders who fled to Taiwan cherished their history and culture. Hunker knew that to be an effective minister, he needed to know the cultural and political history of the Chinese people so he could best understand the events that shaped their worldview.

²³ W. Carl Hunker, *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1970).

²⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 1–12. Hunker describes the political situation on pp. 9–10, 25, 31–38. He describes the history of the ROC’s founding president, Yet-Sen Sun, on pp. 25–38. Hunker was also a missions historian. Robert Morrison’s ministry in China especially inspired him. See Hunker, *Taiwan*, 39.

²⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 3.

Understanding China's history enabled Hunker to minister to the Chinese. He understood that due to the length of Chinese history and culture, their worldview and culture would not change quickly. He knew a long-term focus was necessary.²⁶ He also understood that they valued democracy, and, thus, congregationalism was a viable model for the Chinese church.²⁷ Hunker's understanding of Chinese history allowed him to better understand the Chinese worldview and build an indigenous church that would stand the test of time.²⁸

Cultural Values

Hunker also understood that for a people group to accept an outsider, the outsider must learn to participate in the local culture. Sharing in the local culture involves saying the right things, eating the right foods, and reflecting the right values. Howell and Paris write, "Missionaries often engage in multiple tasks simultaneously. In addition to serving in pastoral positions, they may have medical duties, educational work, economic development projects, and more. In order to be effective, they must understand how to communicate and live effectively in the culture."²⁹ In this section, I demonstrate how Hunker's understanding of Chinese cultural values allowed him to participate in cultural activities and build strong relationships with his disciples.

Confucianism

To understand Chinese culture, one must begin with Confucianism because Confucianism undergirds all of Chinese culture.³⁰ Confucius (551–479 BC) was a

²⁶ Shou-Sui Chen, interview.

²⁷ Lin, interview.

²⁸ See "CBC Church Planting Tree," Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

²⁹ Howell and Paris, *Introducing Cultural Anthropology*, 16–17.

³⁰ Daniel K. Gardner, *Confucianism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 7; Hunker, *Taiwan*, 75

Chinese philosopher and teacher.³¹ Confucianism profoundly influenced the Chinese values system. Hunker understood the influence Confucian philosophy had on Chinese culture. While he would never consider himself a student of Confucius, he was well aware of Confucian principles and philosophy.³² In his book *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution*, Hunker demonstrated his understanding of Confucius. He wrote,

Who is Confucius? American young people may use his name in playing a game. Many mistakenly think of him as an object of religious worship—a sort of Chinese savior. Today’s Chinese still know him as the revered teacher Kung. They speak of him as Kung Fu-Tzu, the master teacher and sage. Transliterated into English, “Kung Fu-Tzu” becomes “Con-fu-cius.”

Born of an aged father and a young mother, Confucius (551–479 B.C.) was a precocious child. He was a student of people, of society, of economics, of government. His wide range of interests included the arts—music, poetry, painting, archery. He is described as dignified, courteous, conscientious, high-minded, studious, and a lover of antiquity, books, and ceremony. He was thoughtful, affable, calm, serenely trustful in an overruling Providence. While intensely religious, he was neither prophet nor priest and spoke little about God, heaven, or the spiritual world.

His interest in a stable society and peaceful government led him to form principles of government and morality, which he sought to teach to any court or government that would accept him. Rejected, he began moving from place to place, gathering disciples about him.³³

Confucian values have had a wide influence over many East Asian countries, including Taiwan.³⁴

At the center of Confucianism is the concept of social harmony.³⁵ Observing proper hierarchical relationships attains harmony. The Confucian idea of harmony undergirds the Chinese value system. Yet, while Confucianism is primarily a philosophy

³¹ Gardner, *Confucianism*, 1.

³² Chen-Kuang Chang, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 24, 2020; Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

³³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 75.

³⁴ Gardner, *Confucianism*, 7.

³⁵ Gardner, *Confucianism*, 10.

for societal reform, zealous followers erected physical temples allowing people to seek religious blessings. In this way, Confucianism serves as a functional religion. Hunker rejected Confucianism as a religious system, like Buddhism or Daoism, but he understood some still worshiped Confucius statues as a form of superstitious religious expression.³⁶

Confucianism has been a pervasive influence on Chinese culture since the time of Confucius; yet, Chiang Kai-Shek and the Kuomintang (KMT) amplified the assimilation of Confucian thought into local culture when Chiang made Taiwan the new capital of the Republic of China (ROC). Regarding the assimilation process, one author writes, “The KMT government propagated Confucianism at all levels of life. Intending to shape the student’s moral character, schools taught basic Confucian values such as the Four Cardinals (*siwei*) and the Eight Virtues (*bade*).”³⁷ Because of the actions of the KMT, Confucian values and principles have permeated every aspect of Taiwanese society: family, holidays, education, spending, work ethic, and religion.

Hunker explains how Confucianism influenced Chinese society: “[Leaders in Taiwan] have sought to build their nation on a foundation of ethical and moral concepts. One element in this foundation is the Confucian tradition, which pervades all of Chinese life.”³⁸ Hunker continued,

Almost synonymous with Chinese philosophy is Confucius. His influence has spread far and wide beyond the borders of China. His pattern for harmonious living has penetrated so deeply the thought of the people of the Far East that the Oriental approach to life can only be understood [if] one is acquainted with his teachings.

³⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79

³⁷ Yen-Zen Tsai, “Confucian Culture in Contemporary Taiwan and Religious Experiences,” in *Religious Experience in Contemporary Taiwan and China*, ed. Yen-Zen Tsai (Taipei: Chengchi University Press, 2013), 143. The Four Cardinals and the Eight Virtues are the foundational principles of the Confucian concept of morality. The Four Cardinals are ritual (*li*), rightness (*yi*), frankness (*lian*), and sense of shame (*chi*). The Eight Virtues are loyalty (*zhong*), filiality (*xiao*), humanity (*ren*), love (*ai*), trust (*xin*), appropriateness (*yi*), harmony (*he*), and equity (*ping*).

³⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 39.

He, more than any of the other great Chinese sages, collected and systematized Chinese thought, added to it his own particular contribution and passed it on to succeeding generations.³⁹

Explaining Confucius's view on society, Hunker wrote, "Recognizing the basic nature of the relationship of people to the state, Confucius proposed an ideal state founded upon a vital concern for the life of the people. With keen insight, he saw that the relationship was mutual, that 'health for the state means peace for the people.'"⁴⁰ In his book, Hunker pointed out that even the names of the major streets in Taipei reflect the eight virtues of Confucianism.⁴¹ Understanding Confucian principles helped Hunker better relate to the people and cultivate deep relationships. In what follows, I offer examples of cultural values undergirded by Confucian principles and explain how Hunker understood each one.

Group-Orientation

Chinese culture is a group-oriented culture, meaning the larger group defines the meaning of "self."⁴² The group can be a social network, personal friendships, or family structure. Each person in the group has an unwritten expectation of loyalty and duty to the group, meaning each person considers how individual actions will affect the overall image of the group. Actions consistent with group expectations maintain or add honor, but actions inconsistent with group expectations disgrace or shame the whole group and the individual.

³⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 75.

⁴⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 32.

⁴¹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 78.

⁴² Amy C. Liu, *Taiwan A to Z: The Essential Cultural Guide* (Taipei: Community Services Center, 2009), 39.

To Confucius, harmony is the key to a peaceful society.⁴³ A society achieves harmony when each participant in the culture fulfills his or her role in the group, according to Confucius.⁴⁴ For example, doing what is best for the group—instead of what might be best for the individual members—achieves group harmony.

In his book, Hunker demonstrated how Confucianism influenced Chinese culture to be group-oriented.⁴⁵ He explained that Confucianism is built on the idea of interrelated relationships that make up the larger group: “In each relationship, there is a balance between obligation and authority. Learned first in the family, these relationships extend into the wider relationships of life and become the basis of a stable society and world.”⁴⁶ Understanding how Confucianism cultivated a group-oriented society allowed Hunker to better participate in the culture.

Family

Family is important in Chinese culture and Confucianism.⁴⁷ Filial piety, or respecting one’s parents and older family members, is one of the most pronounced and important virtues of Confucianism and, thus, Chinese culture.⁴⁸ Younger family members, according to Confucius, owe deep respect and loyalty to older family members, even after they have passed away.⁴⁹

⁴³ Confucius, *The Analects*, trans. Raymond Dawson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 4.

⁴⁴ Winfried Corduan, *Pocket Guide to World Religions* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 52.

⁴⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 75.

⁴⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 77.

⁴⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 3.

⁴⁸ Yen-Zen Tsai, “Confucian Culture,” 144.

⁴⁹ Corduan, *Pocket Guide to World Religions*, 53.

Hunker, too, valued the family.⁵⁰ He believed in strong marriages, setting a good example with his wife, Jeannette.⁵¹ He also believed in the importance of cultivating strong families. One former student explains how he could not see Hunker without Hunker's asking about his marriage and kids.⁵² Hunker also believed in the powerful gospel witness that weddings present, and he sought to help students learn to reflect a Christian example in their wedding ceremony.⁵³

Hunker taught the importance of honoring parents and family members, but he denounced ancestor worship, which is prevalent in Chinese culture.⁵⁴ He told students to stay home if they were unable to attend family gatherings without worshipping ancestors.⁵⁵ He believed students could honor parents and the memory of ancestors without crossing the line into worship. He challenged students to honor the memory of ancestors but not venerate the ancestors themselves or seek a divine blessing in return, which was the heart of ancestor worship.

One of the ways Hunker challenged students in regard to honoring ancestors was by teaching them to examine their actions through a biblical worldview. He knew that many students faced pressure from non-believing family members to venerate ancestors, even though their families knew they were followers of Christ. In order to prevent syncretism, Hunker would constantly ask his disciples about their motivation

⁵⁰ Te-Jen Ke, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 18, 2020.

⁵¹ Chuan-Lin Chang, email interview by author, March 21, 2020.

⁵² Tseng, interview.

⁵³ See Hunker, *Taiwan*, 88; Ching-Tao Ho, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020.

⁵⁴ Gailyn Van Rheenen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1991), 252.

⁵⁵ Phillips, interview.

behind each action.⁵⁶ Instead of telling his mentees what to and not to do, Hunker challenged them to seek and discern the voice of the Holy Spirit by examining their heart motives in light of Scripture.⁵⁷

Relationship

Relationship is another core value of Confucianism. In Chinese culture, this concept is called *guanxi*, a term that does not have an equivalent word in the English language. The closest connection is the word “relationship,” but *guanxi* carries a deeper meaning. *Guanxi* defines a person’s connection to, dependence upon, and obligation in a relationship.⁵⁸ In one sense, *guanxi* is the fabric that holds a society together. As one author writes,

It is just as important to accumulate credit in what I call the “guanxi account” as it is to save money in one’s bank account. Just as we all wish to have more money in our bank account, every Taiwanese [person] desires to accumulate more connections in their *guanxi* account. The more one has in his or her *guanxi* account, the more face, respect, and prestige [one] gains.⁵⁹

Hunker understood the importance of strong relationships in Chinese culture and how Confucianism undergirded this value. He wrote, “Basic in [Confucius’s] teachings are interpretations of man’s relationship to nature and the universe and the proprieties in relationships of man with man.”⁶⁰ Concerning Hunker and *guanxi*, one colleague explains, “For Chinese people, it is all about relationships. [Hunker] understood that essential point. He openly acknowledged that his Mandarin was not the best, but I recall how earnestly people listened when he preached or spoke on other

⁵⁶ Lin, interview

⁵⁷ Lin, interview.

⁵⁸ Liu, *Taiwan A to Z*, 84.

⁵⁹ Liu, *Taiwan A to Z*, 84.

⁶⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 75.

occasions.”⁶¹ The people listened intently because of the relationship they shared with Hunker. Hunker understood the importance of relationships in Chinese culture, and he cared for people in culturally sensitive ways.⁶²

Face

Another important element of Confucianism in Chinese culture is the concept of “face,” or *mianzi*. On a surface level, face means reputation or public image. Face outlines the unwritten rules of *guanxi* for collectivistic societies. Face refers to how the group defines a person’s identity.⁶³ In other words, face is a person’s social image or public self-worth.⁶⁴ A person can gain face in a variety of ways, including success in business or education, or by the honor bestowed by a person of higher status.⁶⁵ However, a person can lose face by causing embarrassment to the group or by failing to fulfill an expectation.

Hunker believed the concept of “giving face” to another was a matter of “moral and ethical principles that govern the relationships of life” and that doing so was not inconsistent with his Christian faith.⁶⁶ One gives face to another by taking the less honorable seat at a dinner, accepting a privilege only after first firmly resisting, and asking for one’s “honorable” name when meeting that person for the first time.⁶⁷ Hunker explained that the cultural values of face “which color all manners and customs are not

⁶¹ Robert Burris, email interview by author, March 5, 2020.

⁶² Hunker, *Taiwan*, 77

⁶³ Jackson Wu, *One Gospel for All Nations: A Practical Approach to Biblical Contextualization* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2015), 128.

⁶⁴ Liu, *Taiwan A to Z*, 57.

⁶⁵ Wu, *One Gospel for All Nations*, 128.

⁶⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 78. For example, Jesus tells his disciples to love their neighbors as themselves (Mark 12:31).

⁶⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 78.

taught by rote, but are felt.”⁶⁸ He had a gentle demeanor that diffused conflict and resolved disagreement.⁶⁹ Believing every person deserved respect and care, Hunker gave face to all.

Holidays

Holidays are another important element of Chinese culture. Confucianism undergirds the Chinese holidays due to the collectivistic nature intrinsic to each holiday celebration. For example, giving face, gathering with one’s family, and honoring parents are each important components of the Chinese holidays.

According to Hunker, the Chinese celebrate many holidays, but the first, and most important, is the Lunar New Year, also known as Chinese New Year or Spring Festival.⁷⁰ Beginning on the first day of the lunar calendar, families greet one another, eat elaborate meals together, and give gifts to one another. The festivities end on the fifteenth day of the month during the Lantern Festival.

Another important holiday is the Moon Festival, also known as the Mid-Autumn Festival. Celebrated on the fifteenth night of the eighth lunar month, the Moon festival represents “wholeness” in a society that craves harmony. One author comments, “The clear, round, full moon symbolizes union and a perfect world.”⁷¹ During the festival, families gather to celebrate the full moon and eat together.

Hunker understood the importance of holidays to the Chinese, and he and his family celebrated the holidays the same their local friends would.⁷² Hunker wrote, “The

⁶⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 77.

⁶⁹ See Ai-Hua Li, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 10, 2020; Chi Wang, email interview by author, March 14, 2020; Ke, interview; Chuan-Lin Chang, interview; Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

⁷⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 103.

⁷¹ Liu, *Taiwan A to Z*, 122.

⁷² Shou-Sui Chen, interview.

Chinese also have their festival joys. Life for [their holidays] also has mysterious enchantments no foreigner can fully understand. Without being born into these joys, he cannot feel their delight. They are precious and must not be lost. Without them, Chinese life becomes emotionally shallow, flat, and tasteless.”⁷³

Hunker demonstrated his understanding of Chinese holidays by discussing when they were held, why each was historically significant, how the people celebrated them, and the effects each holiday has on the culture. For example, he described the Lunar Holiday, or Chinese New Year, in the following way:

King of the festivals is Chinese New Year. Dated between January 25 and February 25 of the solar calendar, it is the one time during the year when farmers may rest. Laborers, businessmen, professional men alike close shop, some for as long as five days. Schools give vacations of three to four weeks.

It is the time of beginnings. Everything is new! All accounts are settled. Old debts are paid. In [traditional] homes, the old kitchen god departs and a new one arrives. Homes are scrubbed from top to bottom, from inside out—a sort of spring housecleaning. There may be new furniture. Gates are painted, often a bright red. Clothes are new, at least one garment each for the children and young people. It is a time of abounding joy.⁷⁴

Hunker and his family knew and embraced the importance of partaking in the holiday festivities.⁷⁵ Their participation meant something to local friends, who watched and appreciated the Hunkers’ acceptance of the local culture.

Gift-Giving

Gift-giving is an expression of the reciprocal nature of *guanxi*, where the giver gains face and gives face by providing an appropriate gift.⁷⁶ Like many cultures, the

⁷³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 103–5. Hunker’s point was that in the same way American holidays were an important part of American culture, so were Chinese holidays to Chinese culture.

⁷⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 103.

⁷⁵ Shou-Sui Chen, interview.

⁷⁶ Chris Bates and Ling-Li Bates, *Culture Shock! A Survival Guide to Customs and Etiquette: Taiwan*, 4th ed. (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2008), 44.

Chinese have unwritten rules about when and what gifts are appropriate for different situations. Some of the popular gift-giving events are birthdays, hospital visits, holidays, weddings, and visits as a guest to someone's home. Hunker understood the purpose and importance of gift-giving, especially when visiting someone's home.⁷⁷

Chinese New Year is a popular time for older family members to give children money in red envelopes, called *hongbao*.⁷⁸ As a fun way to participate in the local culture, Hunker gave a *hongbao* to church members, but the red envelope had Scripture verses instead of money.⁷⁹ In this way, Hunker incorporated a Christian meaning into a local cultural practice.

Conclusion

Hunker understood the Chinese cultural value system and how Confucianism undergirded each element. While never affirming the entirety of the Confucian system, he did apply certain moral and ethical principles that were consistent with biblical teaching. In doing so, he was able to remove some cultural barriers, thus allowing him to build strong relationships with his disciples. In the next section, I explain the Chinese mainline religions and demonstrate Hunker's understanding of each one.

Chinese Mainline Religions

Understanding a people group's culture includes understanding their religion.⁸⁰ Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, also known as the "Three Teachings," are Taiwan's three mainline religions.⁸¹ Hunker witnessed all three in Chinese culture and

⁷⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 78.

⁷⁸ Liu, *Taiwan A to Z*, 80.

⁷⁹ Hsiu-Mei Chang, interview.

⁸⁰ Howell and Paris, *Introducing Cultural Anthropology*, 36.

⁸¹ Joseph A. Adler, *Chinese Religious Traditions* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 13–14.

demonstrated a clear understanding of each one. In so doing, he better ministered to the people of Taiwan and his students.

Confucianism

Earlier in this chapter, I described Confucius, his philosophy, and Hunker's understanding of the ethical principles that govern Confucianism. However, Confucianism was more than a philosophy for government reform. To many, Confucianism also served a spiritual need by providing spiritual guidance for life's problems. What began as a philosophy for the harmonization of society eventually became a form of religious expression.⁸²

Hunker did not, however, consider Confucianism a religious system in the same way as Buddhism. He explained, "Confucianism is not a religion. It is a moral and ethical approach to life that determines what is right and wrong, what is proper or improper, in any situation."⁸³ While he acknowledged that followers erected temples in honor of Confucius, he rejected the notion that followers worshipped Confucius the same way they worshiped Buddhist and Daoist deities.⁸⁴

Chinese religions scholar, Joseph Adler, agrees with Hunker's assessment on Confucius but argues that over time people began to view Confucianism as a form of religion.

In his book *Chinese Religious Traditions*, Adler elaborates,

[Confucianism understands] human beings as essentially social beings, and human fulfillment involves perfecting the moral nature of both the individual and society. Confucius thought that the ideal socio-ethical-political order, the *Dao* or way, had been realized in the past but was now lost, and his "mission" was to revive it. . . . After the fall of the Han dynasty, Confucianism lost much of its philosophical

⁸² Jiexia Elisa Zhai and Robert D. Woodberry, "Religion and Educational Ideals in Contemporary Taiwan," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 50, no. 2 (2011): 310.

⁸³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79.

⁸⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 76.

vitality for several centuries; [however,] it remained the state orthodoxy and the basis of the educational system, and it [integrated into] the system of religious rituals conducted by the emperor and lower officials. In the Song dynasty (960–1279), there was a revival and reformulation of the tradition, with some influence from Buddhism and Daoism. This movement, known in the West as “Neo-Confucianism,” gave Confucianism new appeal, not only as a system of thought but also as a religious way of life for most Chinese intellectuals.⁸⁵

Author Xinzhong Yao, in his book *An Introduction to Confucianism*, also affirms Confucianism as a religion:

With respect to traditional function and cultural heritage, Confucianism is considered a religion because it “has played a central role in the culture of China, Korea, and Japan as the major moral and religious teaching at the very heart of each of these cultures.” With respect to the content of the tradition, it is religious because it has a strong ritual dimension: offerings and sacrifices to ancestors, for example, have been central to Confucian beliefs. With respect to its metaphysical ultimate, Confucianism is a religion due to its understanding of Heaven and to “the relationship of humankind to heaven” that functions as a religious core from which all that flows is “part of religious meaning.”⁸⁶

Although Yao rightly identifies ancestor worship as a core component of Confucianism, Confucius did not introduce ancestor veneration to Chinese society. Appeasing the spirits of ancestors predated Confucius. *The Analects*, Confucius’s most famous work, contains his earliest teachings. In book 2 verse 5, Confucius addressed filial piety by explaining, “When you serve [parents] while they are alive do so in accordance with the rites; and after they are dead, when you bury them, do so in accordance with the rites; and when you sacrifice to them do so in accordance with the rites.”⁸⁷ There, Confucius affirmed a religious belief in ancestors. In that regard, Confucius was not introducing his followers to a religious worldview they did not already

⁸⁵ Adler, *Chinese Religious Traditions*, 14–15.

⁸⁶ Xinzhong Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 39–40. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability. Yao is citing the following resources: Rodney L. Taylor, *The Way of Heaven* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1986), 1; Taylor, *The Religious Dimensions of Confucianism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1986), 2; Ninian Smart, *The World’s Religions*, North and South American ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 110.

⁸⁷ Confucius, *The Analects*, 6.

affirm; he was simply building a theoretical philosophy around the existing religious worldview.

During the rise of Neo-Confucianism during the thirteenth century, Confucian thought syncretized with the mystical nature of Daoism.⁸⁸ The results of this union transformed Confucianism from a societal-reform philosophy into a functional religion. For example, followers of Confucius could now seek divine blessings. Today, adherents worship Confucius as a deity, praying for his blessings in times of need much like adherents of Daoism pray to the Jade Emperor or other local deities.

Buddhism

Buddhism originated in northern India through the teaching of Siddhartha Gautama, who was a contemporary of Confucius and Laozi, the founder of Daoism.⁸⁹ Buddhism entered China through the Silk Road by either Indian merchants or Buddhist missionaries.⁹⁰ The one-time Indian religion assimilated into Chinese culture over hundreds of years, taking on unrecognizable forms compared to early Buddhist expressions in India.⁹¹

Explaining how local religion influenced and changed Buddhism, author Fang-Long Shih writes,

It was not until the Tang Dynasty (618–906 CE) that Buddhism became a part of Chinese religious life, accommodating itself to Chinese culture while retaining certain aspects of Indian Buddhist philosophy that conflict with indigenous Chinese Confucian and Daoist ideas. In particular, Chinese Buddhism has incorporated practices and beliefs relating to the spirits of the dead and has adjusted its theories of the afterlife. Like Daoism, it has developed rituals for the dead to be performed at

⁸⁸ Adler, *Chinese Religious Traditions*, 14–15.

⁸⁹ Ronald Fussell, *The Buddha and His Path to Self-Enlightenment* (London: Buddhist Society, 1955), 26.

⁹⁰ For an analysis of the origins of Buddhism in China, see Bradley Hawkins, *Introduction to Asian Religions* (London: Laurence King, 2004), 237–41.

⁹¹ Adler, *Chinese Religions Traditions*, 17.

funerals or seasonal festivals and has elaborated methods of salvation for the dead or on behalf of the dead.⁹²

Making its way through China, Buddhism arrived in Taiwan by the seventh century before the Dutch occupation in 1624, though some scholars place Buddhism's entry into Taiwan much later.⁹³

Hunker described the people of Taiwan as intensely Buddhist.⁹⁴ As he explained, however, Buddhism did not draw distinctions between faith systems.⁹⁵ Adherents embraced all religions (including Christianity), which is why a Chinese person can identify as a Buddhist, Daoist, and Christian at the same time.

Buddhists in Taiwan during Hunker's time did not believe in reincarnation and were not seeking enlightenment in a traditional Buddhist sense; instead, they were seeking harmony and blessing in this life and the assurance of life after death.⁹⁶ Hunker described Chinese Buddhism in the following way: "From Buddhism comes the assurance of life after death and a system of rewards and punishments."⁹⁷ The Buddhists believed good works and good merit were all a person needed to find relief from pain and achieve a good life after death.⁹⁸ Adherents built good merit by performing good deeds and bowing to idols. Hunker estimated Taiwan in 1970 had three thousand Buddhist

⁹² Fang-Long Shih, "Chinese 'Bad Death' Practices in Taiwan: Maidens and Maternity," *Mortality* 15, no. 2 (May 2010): 131. Where appropriate, I have modified quotations from this resource to enhance readability.

⁹³ See Charles Brewer Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan: Religion and the State, 1660–1990* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), 3; Yi-Jia Tsai, "Taiwanese Buddhism and Religious Experiences," in Yen-Zen Tsai, *Religious Experience in Contemporary Taiwan and China*, 59. Yi-Jia Tsai places Buddhism entering Taiwan in the seventeenth century.

⁹⁴ Carl Hunker, "Formosa: Isle of Hope," Carl Hunker Collection, SBHLA.

⁹⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79.

⁹⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79.

⁹⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79.

⁹⁸ Bates and Bates, *Culture Shock!*, 27.

temples.⁹⁹ Knowing the local people were “intensely Buddhist” and knowing what they were searching for (i.e., relief from pain in this life and the hope of life after death), Hunker was able to minister to the people of Taiwan by providing the real hope of the gospel.¹⁰⁰

Daoism

The third major religion in Taiwan is Daoism, also referred to as Taoism. Daoism means “following the Way.”¹⁰¹ It began as the teaching of Laozi, who was a contemporary of Confucius.¹⁰² In his writings, *Daodejing*, Laozi wrote as a man “whose life is in perfect harmony with the way things are.”¹⁰³

Daoism is the belief that everything in the world consists of *Yin* and *Yang*. *Yin* represents “yielding, declining, shadow, pulling, femaleness, emptiness, the hole rather than the doughnut.”¹⁰⁴ *Yang*, on the other hand, represents “aggression, expanding, light, pushing, maleness, fullness, the donut rather than the hole.” *Yin* and *Yang* represent two forces working together to create harmony.¹⁰⁵

The pursuit of harmony closely aligns Daoism to Confucian philosophy and allows these two systems to sync together. Explaining the similarities and differences between Confucianism and Daoism, Adler explains,

⁹⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 80.

¹⁰⁰ Hunker, “Formosa.”

¹⁰¹ Corduan, *Pocket Guide to World Religions*, 58.

¹⁰² Hawkins, *Introduction to Asian Religions*, 191.

¹⁰³ Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching: A New English Version*, trans. Stephen Mitchell (New York: HarperCollins, 1988), viii.

¹⁰⁴ Bates and Bates, *Culture Shock!*, 46.

¹⁰⁵ Cultural Atlas, “Taiwanese Culture,” accessed May 7, 2018, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/taiwanese-culture/core-concepts>.

While Confucianism stressed that human beings are essentially social beings, the early Daoist classics . . . stressed instead that human beings are essentially natural beings, and that human fulfillment lay in harmonizing our thinking and behavior with the Way (*dao*), which they conceived as the patterns and rhythms of nature. . . . However, in the second century C.E., a new series of revelations—from a deified Laozi—sparked the development of Daoism into a full-fledged religious community, complete with gods, a sacred textual canon, priests, rituals, and meditation. . . . The ultimate goal of Daoist religious practice became the achievement of immortality, with the help of a huge pantheon of gods and immortals.¹⁰⁶

Adler surmises that the ultimate goal of Daoism is to achieve immortality. Shih adds that Daoism served a daily function:

Daoism served Chinese culture as both an alternative and complement to Confucianism, and it incorporates shamanistic practices, deified, and myths into a tradition of philosophy, ritual, and magic. Daoist religion developed as a means of communicating with spirits, both benign and malignant; Daoist specialists are the main performers of rituals to secure the well-being of both the living and the dead, and they are often hired to conduct exorcisms or healing in circumstances of personal or communal crisis. The basis for their control over spirits is a form of “name magic” derived from the indigenous shamanic notion; Daoist specialists summon and dismiss spirits by knowledge of their names, features, and characteristics.¹⁰⁷

While similar to Confucianism in its pursuit of balance and harmony, Daoism emphasizes mystical and spiritual dimensions more than Confucianism.

Hunker observed the spiritual and daily needs adherents sought from Daoism. He wrote, “[To the Chinese], Taoism gives guidance about the meaning of life and the relationship of man to the natural universe.”¹⁰⁸ Daoism met a need Confucianism and Buddhism did not; it balanced a mystical belief with the promise of daily relief.

Hunker saw Daoism as more primitive and pragmatic:

Long before it was given form and structure by Lao-Tzu (twenty years older than Confucius), the concepts and thought of Taoism were inherent in the primitive mind of China. There is no personal god. As water naturally seeks the lowest level of undisturbed rest, so the strong forces of nature seek balance, Taoism believes. Man

¹⁰⁶ Adler, *Chinese Religions Traditions*, 15–16.

¹⁰⁷ Shih, “Chinese ‘Bad Death’ Practices,” 128.

¹⁰⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79.

finds the secret of life, therefore, when he brings self and community into pleasing balance, harmonious with the perfection found in nature.¹⁰⁹

Hunker understood Daoism to be a form of mystical manipulation. Adherents sought the power to ward off evil spirits and to usher in divine blessing. By understanding Daoism, Hunker was better able to communicate the gospel to the Chinese because he understood they were seeking divine power to protect themselves from evil spirits and to receive blessing. The people were searching for meaning and purpose.¹¹⁰ By understanding the hollow promises of Daoism, Hunker was better prepared to share about the true hope found in the gospel.

Chinese Folk Religion

In the previous section, I identified Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism as the three Chinese mainline religions in Taiwan. However, popular Chinese religion is much more convoluted than the mainline three. The most common form of religious expression in Taiwan is a synthesis of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism with animistic undertones.

Hunker understood the complexity of the local religion.¹¹¹ He wrote,

Day-to-day religion in Taiwan is not simple in either practice or understanding. There are more than three thousand Buddhist shrines and temples. Taoist temples number nearly two thousand. Actually, few temples are either purely Buddhist or Taoist. Each incorporates objects and practices of worship of the other. The confusion is compounded by the addition of one or more of twelve hundred local gods. The most popular of these in Taiwan is Matsu, a female goddess and special benefactor of fishermen.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79–80.

¹¹⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 95.

¹¹¹ Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020; Chen-Kuang Chang, interview. For resources on Chinese folk religion, see Adler, *Chinese Religious Traditions*; Wai Yip Wong, “Defining Chinese Folk Religion: A Methodological Interpretation,” *Asia Philosophy* 21, no. 2 (May 2011): 154; Anning Hu and Fenggang Yang, “Trajectories of Folk Religion in Deregulated Taiwan,” *Chinese Sociological Review* 46, no. 3 (Spring 2014): 80.

¹¹² Hunker, *Taiwan*, 80.

Hunker understood that deity worship was a major component of popular religion. He knew what the people called the local deities, how followers worshiped them, and how the deities differed from each other¹¹³ He also understood that in the same way that a person could worship a Buddhist god and Daoist deity without violating one's conscience, so also could a person worship local gods.

Describing the religious worldview of the average person, Hunker explained, "Chinese would find it hard to distinguish between a Buddhist and a Taoist. It has never occurred to him to separate the distinctive roles of the two religions in his life. He is at the same time Buddhist and Taoist."¹¹⁴ Hunker continued,

Ask a Chinese, "Are you Buddhist, Taoist, or Confucianist?" His response probably will be a blank stare of incomprehension. In the first place, to him, Confucianism is not a religion. It is a moral and ethical approach to life that determines what is right and wrong, what is proper or improper, in any situation. His ethics are, therefore, separated from religion. To the average serious American, however, morality is rooted in religion; morality without religion is groundless. . . . While an American cannot be a Jew in religion and a Christian at the same time, the Chinese find it quite natural to be Buddhist and Taoist in religious life and a Confucianist in ethical life.¹¹⁵

Thus, the religious worldview in Taiwan during Hunker's time was not distinctly Confucianism, Buddhism, or Daoism; it was all three synthesized together with animistic

¹¹³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 80. For more on local Taiwanese deities, see Prasenjit Duara, "Superscribing Symbols: The Myth of Guandi, Chinese God of War," *Journal of Asian Studies* 47, no. 4 (November 1988): 780; Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew Strathern, "Growth of Mazu Complex in Cross-Straits Contexts (Taiwan, and Fujian Province, China)," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 23, no. 1 (2009): 67; Jacob Friedmann Tischer, "Mazu Nation: Pilgrimages, Political Practice, and the Ritual Construction of National Space in Taiwan," *Global Politics Review* 4, no. 2 (October 2018): 9; Mark Meulenbeld, "Death and Demonization of a Bodhisattva: Guanyin's Reformulation within Chinese Religion," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 84, no. 3 (September 2016): 693; Barbara E. Reed, "Guanyin Narratives—Wartime and Postwar," in *Religion in Modern Taiwan: Tradition and Innovation in a Changing Society*, ed. Philip Clart and Charles B. Jones (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 188.

¹¹⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79.

¹¹⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79.

undertones. Anthropologists most commonly refer to this unique form of religious expression as Chinese folk religion.¹¹⁶

To understand Chinese folk religion, one must first understand animism. In his book *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*, Gailyn Van Rheenen explains animism as “the belief that personal spiritual beings and impersonal spiritual forces have power over human affairs and, consequently, that human beings must discover what beings and forces are influencing them to determine future action and, frequently, to manipulate their power.”¹¹⁷ As previously stated, Chinese folk religion borrows from the mainline three, but animism undergirds each one.

Explaining how animism is the common unifier tying the three mainline regions together to form Chinese folk religion, Adler writes,

The gods [Taiwanese or Chinese] worship may have Buddhist, Daoist, or Confucian affiliations, or none of these. In fact, Chinese [folk] religion has no proper name—it is not an -ism. It is better to think of Chinese popular religion as a *common underlying set of beliefs and practices* . . . that gives rise to the more specific strands of canonical Chinese religion: Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. These “Three Teachings” have, in turn, had a reciprocal influence on popular religion. . . . While there is some overlap among [the three religions], and in general, they do not demand exclusive membership and rejection of the teachings of the others, they are relatively easy to distinguish conceptually as discrete traditions. Popular religion is harder to define because it *freely borrows from all of the three teachings* while, for the most part, lacking their textual elements.¹¹⁸

Adler continues,

[Chinese folk religion] is difficult to summarize, but there are certain commonalities. One of these is the division of the spiritual world into gods, ghosts, and ancestors, none of which is ontologically distinct from living human beings: all four groups are manifestations of *qi*, and all follow the same natural principles. While they each have their own Way (*dao*)—the ideal pattern or path they should follow—and there is, of course, a difference between the realm of the living (*yang*) and that of the dead (the *yin*, dark, or “occult”), all four groups are part of the

¹¹⁶ Wong, “Defining Chinese Folk Religion.”

¹¹⁷ Van Rheenen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*, 20.

¹¹⁸ Adler, *Chinese Religious Traditions*, 13–14 (emphasis added).

natural order. Thus, in a sense, there is no “supernatural,” strictly speaking, in Chinese religion.¹¹⁹

Hunker acknowledged Chinese animism in his reference to ancestor worship and omens.¹²⁰ Describing animistic superstition, he observed that much of life is governed by good and bad omens.¹²¹ The Chinese believe much of life is controlled by spiritual forces, which include the spirits of ancestors, ghosts, and deities.¹²²

Animism existed in China before Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. For example, Confucius embraced an animistic worldview by teaching his followers to make sacrifices to ancestors.¹²³ Daoism reinforced animistic ideas by embracing the notion that mediums serve as intercessors between the living and ancestors. Similarly, as Buddhism assimilated into Chinese culture over hundreds of years, it absorbed preexisting animistic beliefs as well, such as the belief that burning incense will ward off evil spirits.¹²⁴ Thus, due to the reciprocal nature of the three mainline traditions and the influence of Chinese animism upon each one, Chinese folk religion was the predominant religious worldview of the Chinese people in Hunker’s era.¹²⁵

Joseph B. Tamney provides a description outlining what elements folk religion borrowed from preexisting beliefs and the mainline religions. He explains that Chinese folk religion includes elements traceable to prehistoric times, such as “ancestor worship,

¹¹⁹ Adler, *Chinese Religions Traditions*, 113.

¹²⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 82.

¹²¹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 82.

¹²² Fenggang Yang and Anning Hu, “Mapping Chinese Folk Religion in Mainland China and Taiwan,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 51, no. 3 (2012): 507. For more on animistic worldview, see Paul G. Hiebert, “The Flaw of the Excluded Middle,” *Missiology: An International Review* 10, no. 1 (January 1982): 35–47.

¹²³ Confucius, *Analects*, 6.

¹²⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 63.

¹²⁵ For more on Taiwanese folk religion, see Yi-Jung Liu, “Religious Coping Methods of Taiwanese Folk Religion,” *Journal of Religion and Health* 53, no. 4 (August 2014): 1139.

shamanism, divination, a belief in ghosts, and sacrificial rituals to the spirits of sacred objects and places.”¹²⁶ From Buddhism, folk religion includes elements such as the “belief in karma and rebirth, acceptance of Buddha and other bodhisattvas as gods, and meditational techniques.”¹²⁷ Tamney continues, “The Confucian influence is the concept of filial piety and associated practices. The numerous gods are organized into a hierarchy headed by the Jade Emperor, a deity borrowed from Daoism.”¹²⁸

Hunker explained day-to-day religion in Taiwan as simple in neither practice nor understanding.¹²⁹ Tamney agrees, adding, “Generally, folk religionists are fatalistic yet believe that one’s luck can be affected by pleasing ancestors or gods, by locating graves and buildings in places where vital natural forces are located (geomancy), and by balancing opposing forces (*yin, yang*) within one’s body.”¹³⁰ In what follows, then, I describe four common expressions of Chinese folk religion and demonstrate Hunker’s understanding of each practice.

Ancestor Worship

Ancestor worship is the most common characteristic of Chinese folk religion.¹³¹ Adler writes, “Most Taiwanese families have an altar table . . . holding images and name plaques for both ancestors and gods. . . . The ancestors on a family altar usually

¹²⁶ Joseph B. Tamney, “Asian Popular Religions,” *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society*, ed. William H. Swatos Jr., accessed June 29, 2020, <http://hirr.hartsem.edu/ency/Asian.htm>.

¹²⁷ Tamney, “Asian Popular Religions.”

¹²⁸ Tamney, “Asian Popular Religions.”

¹²⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 80.

¹³⁰ Tamney, “Asian Popular Religions.”

¹³¹ Adler, *Chinese Religions Traditions*, 116.

go back only two or three generations.”¹³² Most of Hunker’s students’ families were not believers and participated in some form of ancestor worship.¹³³

Shih explains that family members worship ancestors due to the debt they owe the deceased: “Ancestors are the senior members of one’s own line of descendants, the people to whom one is indebted for the gift of life, for a family name, for social status, and for property.”¹³⁴ The living owe their name, status, and livelihood to their ancestors. In return for the blessings the deceased already provided, the living must honor and care for the ancestors in the afterlife. Shih continues,

In return, the descendants are expected to care for their ancestors. . . . Paper money and paper models of items of necessity to be used in the afterlife, such as clothes and furniture, were traditionally transmitted to the ancestors through ritual burning. In return, the ancestors are expected to reciprocate by granting the descendants a good harvest, offspring, health, and wealth.¹³⁵

Shih’s point is that ancestor veneration is a reciprocal transaction. The living family members must provide for the deceased family member’s needs, and in return, the ancestor must reciprocate by providing a blessing in the form of health, wealth, and prosperity.

Hunker understood not only the dynamics of ancestor worship; he also understood the pressure his students felt to participate in certain sinful cultural practices, such as praying to ancestors.¹³⁶ When asked how Hunker counseled students to respond to family pressures to participate in religious ceremonies, one colleague explains, “His advice would be not to do it. He felt like the Christian witness was very important. And

¹³² Adler, *Chinese Religions Traditions*, 116.

¹³³ In chap. 3, I demonstrated how Hunker cared for students whose families rejected them due to their faith in Christ and ministry calling.

¹³⁴ Shih, “Chinese ‘Bad Death’ Practices,” 124–25.

¹³⁵ Shih, “Chinese ‘Bad Death’ Practices,” 124–25.

¹³⁶ Huai-Su Chuang, interview by author, Taoyuan, Taiwan, March 20, 2020; Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020.

so, he would say, if you have to go home on Chinese New Year's and worship your ancestors, it would be better to stay away or to be there and not participate in actual worship."¹³⁷ To help his students find a cultural substitute, Hunker encouraged his disciples to find other ways to honor the memory of their ancestors and, in so doing, honor their living parents as well.¹³⁸ Hunker knew religious worldview does not transform quickly. He patiently helped his students identify and evaluate their heart motives through a biblical lens.¹³⁹

Ghosts

The second common expression of Chinese folk religion is the fear of ghosts. A ghost is the spirit of a deceased person who does not have family members to conduct ancestor worship, died an irregular death, or was a woman who died unmarried.¹⁴⁰ Adler explains, "Ghosts are both dangerous and pitiful, and so people make offerings to them—again, as one would give something to a beggar."¹⁴¹ Hunker never addressed ghosts directly in his writing. However, he did believe evil spirits exist, and he taught his disciples to cast them out when necessary.¹⁴²

Deities

The third common expression of Chinese folk religion is the worship of local deities. Hunker commented that the "over twelve hundred local gods" added to the

¹³⁷ Phillips, interview.

¹³⁸ Winstead, interview.

¹³⁹ Lin, interview.

¹⁴⁰ Adler, *Chinese Religions Traditions*, 115.

¹⁴¹ Adler, *Chinese Religions Traditions*, 115.

¹⁴² Phillips, interview.

complexity of religion in Taiwan.¹⁴³ Contained in the folk religion pantheon of gods are house gods, land gods, sea gods, maternity gods, and business gods.¹⁴⁴ Describing the religious commitment of the people in his day, Hunker explained,

Even though many of China's intellectuals claim to be atheists, popular religious practice and ceremony are present everywhere. Worship is not on a particular day of the week, as Christians observe Sunday. Every day is a day of worship; temples are crowded morning by morning with those seeking a blessing for personal or family needs. A god may take a trip for a special mission to a home, announcing his coming along the street by the sound of cymbal and lute. Even people who regard religion with disdain, often participate in festivals honoring the god of a certain city or rural district.¹⁴⁵

Hunker described the average person's inherent propensity to worship local gods. Since Chinese folk religion borrows from Buddhism and Daoism and includes their own local deities, the pantheon of gods is vast.

Hunker had a general understanding of the local gods, mentioning only one explicitly in his writing, which was Matsu. Matsu, meaning "maternal ancestor," was the most popular deity in Taiwan.¹⁴⁶ She was born to a Chinese family in Fujian, China, during the tenth century. She died at the age of twenty-eight during a rescue attempt at sea. While she was alive, people believed she had supernatural abilities to "detect and save people at sea."¹⁴⁷ After Matsu's death, the people revered and worshipped her. Due to the immediate worship she received, local people deified her, claiming she was a goddess.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 80.

¹⁴⁴ Azra Moiz and Janice Wu, *Taiwan*, 2nd ed. (New York: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark, 2006), 82.

¹⁴⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 80–82.

¹⁴⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 80; Tischer, "Mazu Nation," 9.

¹⁴⁷ Tischer, "Mazu Nation," 9.

¹⁴⁸ Stewart and Strathern, "Growth of Mazu Complex," 67.

Matsu holds great significance to the Taiwanese people for many reasons. The most obvious reason is that Taiwan is an island, and adherents believe Matsu, as the “goddess of the sea,” is the protector and defender of Taiwan island.¹⁴⁹ Hunker referred to her as a “special benefactor of fishermen.”¹⁵⁰ He estimated Taiwan had 350 temples dedicated to Matsu.¹⁵¹

Hunker’s general understanding of local deities was sufficient to share the gospel and train his students. He understood that the common person feared spirits and curses. He also knew that faith in Christ was a belief that Jesus was greater and more powerful than evil spirits.

Knowing how common ancestor and deity worship was, Hunker and the missionaries of his time knew a person had truly converted to Christianity when the new convert had removed the idols in his or her home. In this regard, Hunker sought to prevent syncretism by helping new converts remove idols out of their homes.¹⁵² Removing existing idols demonstrated singular allegiance to Christ. In doing so, he taught his disciples how to address the local religious worldview through a biblical perspective, which meant a singular commitment to Jesus.

Folk Rituals

The fourth common expression of Chinese folk religion is the practice of rituals.¹⁵³ Folk religion rituals describe an outward expression of one’s inward faith. However, in the case of the Chinese people of Hunker’s day, participation in rituals also

¹⁴⁹ Tischer, “Mazu Nation,” 12.

¹⁵⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 80.

¹⁵¹ Stewart and Strathern, “Growth of Mazu Complex,” 67.

¹⁵² Phillips, interview.

¹⁵³ Two of Hunker’s disciples agree that he understood the religious rituals of the folk religion as well as a foreigner could. See Tsai, interview, February 26, 2020; Chen-Kuang Chang, interview.

revealed an inward fear of spirits. Underlying the Taiwanese folk religion is the emotion of fear. Anthropologists describe animistic cultures as “fear-based” cultures.¹⁵⁴ Fear of torment from wandering ghosts, angry ancestors, and bad fortune causes the average person to participate in religious rituals to ensure safety and prosperity.

Hunker described the ritualistic attitude of the Chinese by writing,

For many, much of life is governed by “days of good omen and bad,” especially relevant for decisions about weddings and funerals. Most homes have altar shelves and ancestral tablets. Electrified red-light candles today modernize religious ritual, replacing old tallow candles on the altar. When visiting these homes, one is always sensitive to the odor of burning incense.¹⁵⁵

The people were very religious, and they expressed their religion through many rituals.

Incense burning. One of the more overt religious rituals for Chinese folk religion is incense burning. Hunker acknowledged the frequent use of incense burning and the role it played in religious activity.¹⁵⁶ Practitioners burn incense at religious temples, in private homes, and for the “blessing” of local deities for local businesses.¹⁵⁷ Incense dispensers are long thin strips adherents use to worship. Holding the incense in front of their face, practitioners bow to the gods. Practitioners also believe the smoke of the incense will help pass prayers to heaven, where the gods reside. Incense burning is one of the most common characteristics of Chinese culture in Taiwan.

¹⁵⁴ For more on “fear-based” cultures, see Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside, 1946), 223; Timothy Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think about and Discuss Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 79; Eugene A. Nida, *Customs and Cultures: Anthropology for Christian Missions*, 3rd ed. (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1977), 150; Roland Muller, *The Messenger, the Message, and the Community: Three Critical Issues for the Cross-Cultural Planter* (USA: CanBooks, 2013), 111; Jayson Georges, *The 3D Gospel: Ministry in Guilt, Shame, and Fear Cultures* (USA: Time Press, 2016).

¹⁵⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 82.

¹⁵⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 82.

¹⁵⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 82.

Food sacrifice. Food sacrifice was another ritual practitioners used to gain favor with local deities.¹⁵⁸ Leaving food on the altar in either the temple or the home was a common practice. The food is a blessing to the ancestor, god, or ghost, depending on whom the adherent is seeking to please or appease. Different times of the year require different types of foods.

Hunker acknowledged animal sacrifices and elaborate food sacrifices were offered to appease spirits and honor deities. He wrote, “Even people who regard religion with disdain often participate in festivals honoring the god of a certain city or rural district. Fat hogs are slaughtered, and elaborate food prepared.”¹⁵⁹

Summary

Hunker understood that the Chinese people of Taiwan were naturally spiritual. He knew rapid change had softened the soil of people’s hearts, and they were seeking spiritual answers to life’s problems.¹⁶⁰ Many left behind house gods when they relocated from the mainland, and they were searching for new hope.¹⁶¹ He also understood the average person was fearful of perceived spirits and ghosts that sought to torment the living. Understanding these religious strongholds helped Hunker better minister to the people and train a generation of evangelists. While the animist was concerned about water for crops and ancestral blessings for good health, Hunker trained a generation of evangelists to share Christ crucified as man’s substitutionary atonement for the forgiveness of sin.¹⁶² Understanding the religious worldview of the people helped Hunker present Christ clearly, and it helped him train a generation of evangelists to do the same.

¹⁵⁸ Adler, *Chinese Religions Traditions*, 23.

¹⁵⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 80.

¹⁶⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 15.

¹⁶¹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 15.

¹⁶² Carl Hunker, “The Content of Your Christian Message,” Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

Conclusion

Hunker demonstrated a deep desire to know and participate in the local culture throughout his tenure as a cross-cultural missionary. He sought to be like the Chinese as much as possible, and his Chinese disciples and missionary colleagues noticed, prompting one disciple to say, “He is so Chinese; I did not feel like he was a foreigner.”¹⁶³ Due to Hunker’s assimilation into the Chinese culture, his disciples felt like he was one of them, making it easier for them to relate to him.

Hunker’s understanding of Chinese history aided him in understanding the cultural worldview of the people, which enabled him to understand some of the difficulties the people endured. Understanding how Confucianism undergirded all of Chinese culture helped him remove cultural barriers and build deep relationships with the local people. Understanding the three mainline religions equipped him to minister in Taiwan and contextualize the gospel. And, finally, understanding local folk religion enabled him to understand the spiritual obstacles those coming to Christ faced and the cultural pressures the families of his students placed on them.

Hunker’s understanding of culture helped him influence Taiwan Baptists in a different way than his care for people, passion for the lost, and commitment to indigeneity did. Hunker better served the people because he understood their culture. By considering the history, values, mainline religions, and religious worldview, namely, how animism undergirded Chinese folk religion, Hunker significantly influenced his students. While not an expert on any of these areas, he demonstrated a good knowledge, which enabled him to participate in the local culture, remove cultural barriers, build deep relationships, and influence his disciples. In the next chapter, I show how Hunker’s commitment to indigeneity further influenced the life and history of Taiwan Baptists.

¹⁶³ Hsiu-Mei Chang, interview.

CHAPTER 6

HUNKER'S COMMITMENT TO INDIGENEITY

Carl Hunker's funeral service bulletin listed the many roles he played in people's lives during his thirty-four-year ministry in Taiwan. It reads, "Carl served as a church planter, pastor, seminary professor, and seminary president, as well as mentor to hundreds of his students and congregants."¹ In an article for *Taiwan Journal*, Hunker wrote, "Mission work on any foreign field follows a rather definite pattern of progress: preaching and evangelism, the training of new Christians, the organization of new churches, then, the providing of a trained national leadership for the churches and institutions."² Hunker believed training indigenous leadership was an essential step in the missionary task.³

Hunker arrived on the field as a young missionary with a commitment to train indigenous leadership, and he maintained that commitment throughout his tenure. In 1970, after Hunker had been on the mission field for twenty-three years, he filled out a Foreign Mission Board (FMB) questionnaire that asked, "In what ways have your approach to your work and your philosophy of missions changed since you began serving overseas?" He answered, "No change in basic approach (evangelism at the heart; strong

¹ "Carl Hunker Funeral Bulletin," January 23, 2016, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

² Carl Hunker, "Taiwan Baptist Seminary Faculty," *Taiwan Journal: A Baptist Mission Review* 6 (July–August 1959): 3.

³ W. Carl Hunker, *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1970), 92. In this dissertation, the terms "indigenous" and "indigeneity" refer to the Chinese people in Taiwan, not to the sixteen aboriginal tribes in Taiwan.

person-to-person contact; indigenous churches with national leadership, etc.).”⁴ Hunker had a life-long commitment to indigeneity that produced a generation of Taiwan Baptist leaders.

No matter what leadership role Hunker held, he was “committed to training and cultivating new leaders.”⁵ Young leaders recognized Hunker’s commitment to indigeneity and looked to him for advice and mentoring. Believing Hunker had their best interest in mind, they trusted him to speak into their lives. Even after graduating, Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary (TBTS) alumni sought Hunker’s counsel. For example, Tseng Ching-En comments, “Whenever I could not make up my mind or make a decision, of course, the first thing that came to my mind is the Bible. And second, what came to my mind is if I were Dr. Hunker, what would I do? I would ask, ‘What would Jesus do, What would Paul do, then What would Dr. Hunker do?’”⁶

Hunker began his ministry in Taiwan with the end in mind. He knew from his dissertation on William Carey that the missionary must pass the leadership baton to indigenous leaders, and he sought to cultivate leaders and transfer responsibility.⁷ The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to demonstrate how Hunker influenced the life of Taiwan Baptists through his commitment to indigeneity.

I explain Hunker’s commitment to indigeneity in three ways. First, I demonstrate how he developed local leaders, emphasized contextualization to reflect the local culture, and evaluated the health of a church based on the three-self principles of

⁴ Carl Hunker, “Information Questionnaire,” November 17, 1970, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁵ Yen-Chen Peng, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 5, 2020.

⁶ Ching-En Tseng, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 12, 2020.

⁷ Carl Hunker, “The Influence of William Carey on the Principles of Subsequent Missions” (ThD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1946),” 156. For more on passing the baton of leadership to indigenous leadership, see Tom A. Steffen, *Passing the Baton: Church Planting That Empowers*, 2nd ed. (La Habra, CA: Center for Organizational and Ministry Development, 1997).

indigenization. Second, I show Hunker's commitment to convention indigeneity by demonstrating how he helped establish the convention, guided it towards a missional identity, and mentored young convention leaders.⁸ Third, I show Hunker's commitment to seminary indigeneity at TBTS by demonstrating how he cultivated an indigenous faculty, developed an indigenous curriculum, and empowered an indigenous president to lead the seminary forward.

Local Church Indigeneity

Hunker was committed to local church indigeneity. One colleague shares the following about Hunker's commitment:

He constantly sought to learn "the Chinese way" and to demonstrate his commitment to Chinese culture. He sought to introduce Chinese cultural ideas into the church. For example, finding a way for the church to remember the ancestors, which is important for the Chinese culture. The church needed to be Chinese and not American.⁹

Hunker believed the local church must reflect the cultural expressions of her context but without compromising biblical truth. Hunker knew that a crucial task facing Chinese Christians in Taiwan was learning to live out their faith in their own culture.¹⁰ In what follows, I describe Hunker's commitment to local church indigeneity by demonstrating how he developed local leaders, cultivated a Chinese Baptist identity, and utilized the three-self principle of indigenization.

⁸ While the idea of a Baptist convention was a Western model, however, Hunker was committed to seeing the convention made up of and led by indigenous people.

⁹ Ron Winstead, email interview by author, March 4, 2020.

¹⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 83.

Local Leadership Development

Of Hunker's many contributions to the development of indigenous Baptist life in Taiwan, perhaps his most significant contribution was leadership development.¹¹ Upon arriving in Taiwan, he immediately recognized the need for more leaders.¹² Hunker's purpose for writing *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution* was to argue for more resources to raise up leaders in Taiwan who could engage more needs in and outside Taiwan, including the eighteen million Chinese living outside of the mainland.¹³ He believed the Communist government's control over China, or as he called it "The Bamboo Curtain," would eventually fall, and China would reopen in his lifetime and be ripe for harvest.¹⁴ While he was wrong about China's reopening, his emphasis on leadership development raised up a generation of pastors and church leaders who were convictionally Baptist.

Hunker went on to write that a "tang of regret" existed among the Baptists of his day that there were not more trainers and training systems when the Baptists first arrived in Taiwan in the early 1950s.¹⁵ Explaining what he meant by "tang of regret," Hunker wrote, "A ready and abundant harvest was limited by a lack of laborers—a single Baptist pastor, only a few missionaries—and no training center for young volunteers."¹⁶ Hunker believed if Taiwan had had more resources, missionary families, and proper training facilities at the beginning of Baptist work, then the harvest would have been immeasurably greater.¹⁷ Perhaps he was right, but God used his "tang of regret" to motivate him to develop leaders to meet the needs on and off the island.

¹¹ "Carl Hunker Funeral Bulletin."

¹² Hunker, *Taiwan*, 18.

¹³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 117.

¹⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 107.

¹⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 110.

¹⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 110.

¹⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 18.

Hunker primarily developed leaders for the local church through the seminary. He wrote, “The seminary is the lifeline of leadership for the developing churches of Taiwan.”¹⁸ One way Hunker sought to prepare students for church ministry was by requiring them to memorize large amounts of Scripture.¹⁹ One student explains, “He paid much attention to the Word of God. In the ‘public preaching’ course he taught, he required students to commit fifty Bible verses to memory. This [practice] influenced the students to pay special attention to teaching the Word of God in future pastoral meetings.”²⁰ Hunker also required students taking his evangelism and missions courses to commit fifty verses to memory.²¹

Hunker concentrated on developing leaders through the seminary in Taipei, knowing God would mobilize these committed leaders to meet the needs of the Chinese world. Hunker continued mentoring relationships regardless of where the students’ ministry took them.²² What began at the seminary developed into life-long mentoring relationships.

While Hunker’s primary method for developing leaders was through the seminary, he also mentored lay leaders through Amoy Street Baptist Church (ASBC) and other church plants. Explaining the value of young lay church leaders, Hunker wrote, “In newly founded churches and mission points, [young lay leaders] often carried heavy responsibilities of leadership, even though they were but new Christians. They were

¹⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 113.

¹⁹ Hsiu-Mei Chang, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020.

²⁰ Bih-Feng Nien, email interview by author, March 31, 2020.

²¹ Hsiu-Mei Chang, interview.

²² Rei-Yi Tsai, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020.

enthusiastic, resourceful, and willing to accept any challenge. Abounding in energy, they seemed never to tire.”²³ Lay leaders served important roles in the young churches.

Hunker affirmed lay leaders’ serving the church in multiple roles such as preachers and church administrators, but not as pastors.²⁴ A pastor, he believed, should be a seminary graduate and an ordained minister.²⁵ Because of Hunker’s firm belief that pastors must fulfill seminary and ordination requirements, he knew there would continue to be a shortage of qualified pastors. If they were going to evangelize all of the people in Taiwan, then they would need a plethora of lay leaders. Agreeing with a local pastor’s sentiments, Hunker expressed, “The hope for advance in Christian witness rests on the shoulders of laymen. [Lay leadership] is biblical and is especially true in societies of a non-Christian tradition like ours. The needs of our work are much too critical, our resources far too meager, to wait on a formally trained clergy.”²⁶ Hunker knew that a strong healthy church had strong vocational and lay leaders. In the following subsections, I explain how Hunker developed local leaders by emphasizing pastoral leadership, personal character, and local church centrality.

Pastoral leadership. Hunker emphasized pastoral leadership training, believing pastors were essential to the health of churches. He wrote, “Leadership training, [which is] very important in Taiwan because pastoral leadership is insufficient, is a prime objective of men’s work.”²⁷ Hunker fully affirmed the need for faithful men to serve the churches as pastors. Based on that conviction, he trained pastors with two primary ministry skills: preaching and administration. He believed the preaching of God’s Word

²³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 18.

²⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 86.

²⁵ Carl Hunker, “From a Missionary’s Diary,” May 30, 1958, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

²⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 86.

²⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 86.

was the most important ministry of the church.²⁸ According to Peng Yen-Chen, Hunker's preferred method for teaching the Bible was a verse-by-verse exposition of the biblical text, and he taught his disciples to follow the same method.²⁹

In addition to the vital responsibility of preaching, Hunker also believed pastors must be trained to meet the many needs of the church. Li Chien-Hu remarks, "Hunker did a very good job preparing us to become pastors in the [seminary] course called church administration. For example, he would tell us how to baptize new converts, administer the Lord's Supper, [officiate] a wedding, and conduct hospital visits."³⁰ In doing so, Hunker demonstrated the importance pastors had in caring for the spiritual and physical wellbeing of the church members.

Hunker believed pastors should be above reproach, and to be above reproach, pastors must be aware of their interaction with female church members. Li continues, "[Hunker taught us] to take our wives when we visited [female] church members. Also, if a [woman] comes to talk when we are in our office, we should always have the windows and the doors open to avoid misunderstanding."³¹ Hunker's purpose was to teach the young pastors how ministers of the gospel are to reflect transparency and minister with wisdom. Li adds, "Hunker also told us when pastors pray for church sisters, then we should not lay our hands on the sister's head or [her] shoulders."³²

Hunker believed the office of pastor was restricted to biblically qualified men.³³ Even when he helped lead Emmanuel Chinese Baptist Church (ECBC) in Kansas

²⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 86.

²⁹ Peng, interview.

³⁰ Chien-Hu Li, telephone interview by author, March 26, 2020.

³¹ Chien-Hu Li, interview.

³² Chien-Hu Li, interview.

³³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 86; Chen-Kuang Chang, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 24, 2020.

City, Kansas, he affirmed male leadership in the pastorate. While Hunker did not appoint, ordain, or support women serving in the office of pastor, he did affirm women attending seminary and serving essential needs in the church.³⁴ In my interview with Linda Phillips, I asked her how Hunker encouraged the female students to be involved in ministry. She replied, “Well, first of all, he encouraged them to get married to one of the [male] students and become a pastor’s wife, because he felt like the wife was a very important part of the ministry. [He believed] that if the wife was theologically trained, she would understand more of what her husband was doing in ministry.”³⁵

Phillips continues,

And for those who did not get married, Hunker would encourage them to be involved in women’s work. [For example,] the [Woman’s Missionary Union] (WMU) was very large. And, his wife was involved in WMU, so he would want his [female] students to be involved in WMU, student work, Sunday school, and religious education.³⁶

Hunker affirmed women in ministry, even praising early single female FMB missionaries for their role in organizing and planting churches in their homes, but not in serving as pastors.³⁷ Phillips adds, “That is how he encouraged the women, but I think marriage and [ministering as] the pastor’s wife was the highest thing for him.”³⁸

Personal character. While Hunker believed preaching and ministering were essential functions of the pastor, he also believed that pastors must have strong moral character. The close of Hunker’s book calls for radical involvement in the task: “Taiwan’s unfinished revolution calls for a continuing supply of human resources,

³⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 84–85.

³⁵ Linda Phillips, telephone interview by author, March 13, 2020.

³⁶ Phillips, interview.

³⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 14.

³⁸ Phillips, interview.

persons with a particular kind of *character* who are willing to serve in a particular kind of way, either at home or in Taiwan.”³⁹ Hunker went on to write, “Revolution, even though evolutionary in character, is costly. Nothing less than radical involvement will meet the needs of today’s world. These needs speak relevantly to Christians and what they have to offer. Living for Christ has never been easy or convenient, but it is essential for progressive change.”⁴⁰ Hunker called for nothing less than “radical involvement” from the leaders he was mentoring—and that involvement required strong moral character.⁴¹

Hunker identified the character values he instilled in leaders, referring to them as “conditions.” The first condition was understanding and appreciation, because understanding leads to appreciation, according to Hunker.⁴² To minister cross-culturally, the worker must seek to understand the context of the people. While Hunker sought to cultivate appreciation in his indigenous mentees, he also delivered a strong message to American missionaries. In his description of the “understanding and appreciation” condition, Hunker wrote,

Americans live in an affluent society. Keywords are “success, progress, action.” An “America is best” mentality dulls our senses to tragic needs and closes doors on international service. How easy to close the mind disdainfully by withholding appreciation and understanding of the accomplishments of other people, whether far or near.⁴³

Understanding and appreciation are characteristics Hunker reflected in his own life, and he expected his mentees to exhibit them as well.

³⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 121 (emphasis added). Hunker’s “revolution” was a call for spiritual engagement and transformation, rather than military action.

⁴⁰ Hunker *Taiwan*, 122.

⁴¹ Hunker *Taiwan*, 122.

⁴² Hunker, *Taiwan*, 119.

⁴³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 119.

The second condition Hunker identified was acceptance.⁴⁴ Acceptance dealt with issues of pride and ethnocentrism, not religious tolerance. Hunker's warning was just as relevant to American missionaries who saw themselves as superior to the indigenous people as it was for the Han pastor who saw himself as superior to a member of another ethnic group such as the Minnan Taiwanese, Hakka, or an aboriginal group.⁴⁵

Hunker's point was that the gospel condemns all forms of ethnocentrism. All believers are equally God's children. In other words, if Hunker's strategy to raise up leaders in Taiwan to engage the eighteen million Chinese outside of the mainland and the seventy million mainlanders once China reopened were to work, then the Taiwan leaders must kill their ethnic pride and be willing to see others as equal partners in the faith. Hunker displayed this attitude, and to his credit, he saw his Chinese partners as equal brothers and sisters in the faith.

The third condition Hunker cultivated in his mentees was commitment.⁴⁶ He wrote, "Mass apathy, complacency, aloofness, prejudice, and indulgence are attitudes of contemporary society which speak of the slow dying of motivation. Without challenging motivation, life becomes dull and tedious, as it has for many. Without radical other-person motivation, a society sickens with an overdose of itself."⁴⁷ Hunker's point was that Taiwan Baptists' revolution to meet the spiritual needs of the Chinese world demanded personal sacrifice, and the task to evangelize the Chinese diaspora could not be completed without the personal commitment to persevere.

⁴⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 120.

⁴⁵ Minnan Taiwanese are Chinese people who migrated to Taiwan from southern Fuzhou before the Japanese occupation of 1895–1945. The Hakka people originally descended from northern China and followed the Minnan people to Taiwan before the Japanese occupation. The aboriginals are of Southeast Asia descent and are the original inhabitants of Taiwan island.

⁴⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 120.

⁴⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 120.

Hunker went on to give three “tests” of a person’s voluntary commitment to the task.⁴⁸ The first test evaluated a person’s moral and spiritual vision, which he described as the ability to see needs and evaluate different methods to meet those needs. The second test was a voluntary self-denial out of concern for others.⁴⁹ Hunker explained, “Voluntary self-denial is the seed of life, for self and for others. Self-gratification for its own sake is the doom of a generation.”⁵⁰ Sacrifice on the part of every believer, Hunker argued, is necessary for all to hear the gospel. The last test of personal commitment was love. He wrote, “Strong love means identification on [the] basis of respectful equality.”⁵¹ Hunker reiterated the importance of equality. A strong love, he argued, is the final test of a person’s commitment to the revolution.

Hunker believed that if the young ministers did not cultivate strong moral character now, then they would not develop it later. Hunker held high expectations for his mentees, but, as one missionary colleague notes, “Carl never asked anyone to do anything that he was not willing to do himself.”⁵² Cultivating character was not easy, but it was necessary to Hunker.

Local church centrality. Hunker developed indigenous leaders for the building up and strengthening of the local church.⁵³ Hunker’s aim was not to mentor random leaders; he invested in those who believed the local church was central to God’s mission.⁵⁴ By instilling this same commitment in students, Hunker developed a

⁴⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 121.

⁴⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 121.

⁵⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 121.

⁵¹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 121.

⁵² LeRoy Hogue, telephone interview by author, March 3, 2020.

⁵³ Hunker, “Taiwan Baptist Seminary Faculty,” 3.

⁵⁴ Hunker, “Taiwan Baptist Seminary Faculty,” 3.

generation of leaders who were also committed to local church centrality.⁵⁵ Tsai Rei-Yi explains that even Hunker's philosophy for the seminary was also grounded in the centrality of the local church, believing that the seminary existed for the church.⁵⁶

In conclusion, Hunker understood the need for more leaders. Hunker's primary means for leadership development was the seminary, yet he also developed lay leaders through ASBC. Regardless of the entity through which he developed leaders, Hunker emphasized pastoral leadership, personal character, and local church centrality. In addition to these traits, he sought to cultivate leaders who embraced a Chinese Baptist identity.

Chinese Baptist Identity

Hunker also demonstrated his commitment to local church indigeneity through his emphasis on contextualization in the local church. He believed churches should reflect the characteristics of the local culture as much as possible without compromising biblical principles. In this regard, Hunker planted churches that were distinctly Baptist, but he encouraged those churches to find ways to live out their Christian identity in the local culture.

Hunker helped local leaders cultivate a Baptist identity in two primary ways. First, his church administration course at the seminary was an essential tool that helped a young generation of church leaders learn what it meant to be Baptist.⁵⁷ Second, ASBC became Hunker's church ministry model that served as his example for what a Baptist church in Taiwan should be.

⁵⁵ Tsai, interview.

⁵⁶ Tsai, interview.

⁵⁷ Tsai, interview. Hunker taught Baptist church history and distinctives.

Hunker became ASBC's senior pastor in 1953 when he moved from Taichung to Taipei.⁵⁸ He implemented a comprehensive system of church leadership and administration that reflected Baptist principles that integrated Chinese culture. The comprehensive church system included a Sunday school program for all ages, a traditional choir, a giving system, and formal church membership.⁵⁹

Ke Te-Jen explains, "We only had a superficial understanding of the Bible. So, everyone naturally looked up to [Hunker] because of his status. People at that time had no idea what the American Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) was. Hunker taught us everything. Until Hunker, we lacked the knowledge of what a Baptist church was."⁶⁰ Based on Hunker's leadership, ASBC established a system that still stands strong today, an accomplishment that pastors still credit to Hunker's influence.⁶¹

Hunker's system also installed a comprehensive deacon ministry. One ASBC church member explains that they still use the same system today that Hunker implemented over sixty years ago. He shares, "We have nine deacons, and they each serve three-year terms. So, every year three rotate on and three rotate off."⁶² He continues, "So the church constitution included what a deacon term should be. [For example,] how long should [a deacon term] be, and everything regarding the organization of the church. Everything came from Dr. Hunker. Everything he says, we did."⁶³

Hunker not only taught ASBC and her members what it meant to be a Baptist church, but he used ASBC to teach others as well. Hunker knew teaching Baptist

⁵⁸ Hunker served as ASBC's pastor until an indigenous pastor was ready.

⁵⁹ To this day, ASBC has a list of every church member in her sixty-nine-year history.

⁶⁰ Te-Jen Ke, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 18, 2020.

⁶¹ Tseng, interview.

⁶² Duan Lin, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020.

⁶³ Lin, interview.

principles in a seminary classroom was not enough. His students and other church leaders needed to see a living example. ASBC became that example.

As an assignment for his church administration course at the seminary, Hunker required every student to visit ASBC to see Baptist principles in practice. Since all the seminary students were required to observe ASBC, Hunker's model for a Baptist church became the predominant model for all of the Baptist churches in Taiwan.⁶⁴ The Chinese professors observed Hunker's model, too. As one ASBC lay leader explains, "Many professors from TBTS came here to ask about our church administration system. I ask, 'why?' They said it was because Pastor Hunker installed a comprehensive church administration system."⁶⁵ Hunker's commitment to Baptist identity was a vital component to his commitment to indigenity, but Baptist identity was not enough. Hunker stressed the importance for each Baptist church to reflect the characteristics of the local culture, at least as far as a church could without compromising biblical fidelity.

Hunker knew the difficulty of planting churches that were biblically faithful yet culturally sensitive. He described the difficulty of the task in his book, writing,

A crucial task facing Chinese Christians is that of making their faith a part of the cultural fiber of their nation. Daoism was born in China. It is indigenous. Through two thousand years of history, Buddhism has become part and parcel of Chinese thought and life. It also is now indigenous. But the high spiritual demands of the Christian faith, along with the resistance of a tightly woven society, have made the planting of Christianity in Chinese life a difficult task.⁶⁶

In the last chapter, I demonstrated Hunker's understanding of Chinese culture, including his understanding of the history and makeup of Chinese Daoism and Buddhism. Hunker understood how these two belief systems became acceptable

⁶⁴ Ke, interview.

⁶⁵ Ke, interview.

⁶⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 83.

components of Chinese culture. Daoism was born into the culture, while Buddhism took several centuries to assimilate, losing its primitive roots in the process.

Hunker knew some people despised Christianity due to its affiliation with foreigners, while others were neutral. He wrote, “Many parents are indifferent to the religious faith of their children. With an air of tolerance, they shrug their shoulders when asked about the religious needs of the family. But others regard Christianity with suspicion as a religion of the foreigner. To them, Christianity has not become an accepted part of Chinese culture.”⁶⁷ To Hunker, the more Chinese churches reflected Chinese culture, the more Chinese people would be willing to hear the gospel.

While planting indigenous churches was a difficult task, Hunker saw progress and rejoiced in the growth of the church. He explained,

Chinese Baptist churches are not Southern Baptist churches imported from abroad and transplanted as hothouse plants in another soil. Baptists from America can find in Chinese Baptist churches much that is like their own home church. Yet, Chinese Baptists are planting the seeds of the gospel in Chinese soil and producing a church that has distinctive Chinese characteristics.⁶⁸

Hunker knew Christianity was taking root in Taiwan when the churches identified as Baptist yet expressed their faith with distinctly Chinese characteristics, for example, by preaching the Bible and worshipping God in the Chinese language.

Hunker continued to express his satisfaction for churches that he considered “homegrown” and reiterated how essential it was for churches to reflect characteristics of the local culture by writing,

[Contextualization] is essential or else Christianity will never become a vital part of Chinese life. Baptist churches must not be wholly dependent upon foreign support. Their leadership must be “homegrown.” The expression of Christian life and worship must be Chinese flavored. Not only Christianity as a religion and not only local churches as institutions, but individual Christians must be able to stand alone. Any Christian whose faith is rooted only in the friendship of another, whether

⁶⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 82.

⁶⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 83.

Chinese or foreigner, will not long stand the test of separateness and aloneness required of Christ's followers in a hostile environment.⁶⁹

Hunker understood that contextualization in the local church was not just a sound missiological principle. Reflecting distinctly Chinese characteristics not only pleased the Lord, but it was also essential for the survival of young churches in a hostile environment.

In conclusion, Hunker emphasized contextualization in the local church. He encouraged churches to find ways to live out their Christian identity in the local culture. To Hunker, the more Chinese churches reflected Chinese culture, the more Chinese people would be willing to hear the gospel. A healthy church, he believed, firmly believed the Bible but expressed that belief with distinctly Chinese characteristics.

Indigenous Three-Self Principle

Hunker also demonstrated his commitment to local church indigeneity through the three self-principle of indigenization.⁷⁰ Hunker believed the three-self principle was a healthy means of evaluating the health of a church.⁷¹ The three-self principle of church indigenization includes self-governing, self-funding, and self-propagating.

Self-governing. Hunker emphasized national leadership development, especially the training of local pastors, due to the lack of biblically qualified and theologically trained men who could serve in the pastorate.⁷² Desiring leaders to be

⁶⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 83.

⁷⁰ For a thorough explanation of the three-self principle, see Melvin L. Hodges, *The Indigenous Church*, 12th ed. (Springfield, MO: Gospel, 2002); Charles Brock, *Indigenous Church Planting: A Practical Journey* (Neosho, MO: Church Growth International, 1994).

⁷¹ Hunker discusses the three-self principle in relation to William Carey in his Th.D. dissertation. See Hunker, "The Influence of William Carey," 168. For more on three-self church philosophy and methodology, see John L. Nevius, *The Planting and Development of Missionary Churches (USA: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016)*; R. Pierce Beaver, *To Advance the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).

⁷² Hunker, *Taiwan*, 86.

“homegrown,” he emphasized leadership development at the seminary and at ASBC. Hunker and other missionaries did serve as senior pastors at the start of churches, but they were intentional to develop leaders and pass responsibility to those leaders when they were ready.⁷³

For example, Hunker served ASBC until an indigenous leader was ready to lead the church.⁷⁴ The same goes for other churches Hunker started and later transferred pastoral responsibilities to indigenous leaders.⁷⁵ He was always preparing someone to take his place to lead the church.⁷⁶ He believed indigenous leaders should govern their own churches.

Self-supporting. Hunker knew it was financially difficult to start a church. He affirmed the self-supporting principle as a goal to achieve and not as a prerequisite from the start. Foreign financial assistance was beneficial in the beginning stages of the church, Hunker believed, but a trajectory towards financial independence was important. In describing a ten-year plan for a church plant to be financially independent, Hunker wrote,

From the beginning, the new Christians are encouraged to give. A budget, including the salary of their pastor, is prepared. Because they are small, many mission points adopt a “Ten-Year Plan” of self-support. Outside aid is reduced by one-tenth each year. The ultimate goal is an increase in membership by one-tenth each year, or at least a growth in giving power by one tenth each year.⁷⁷

Hunker’s ten-year self-supporting plan followed a practical trajectory towards financial independence while demonstrating gospel partnership from the beginning.

⁷³ Ke, interview.

⁷⁴ Chien-Chung Chou, telephone interview by author, March 22, 2020. Hunker served as senior pastor of ASBC from 1953 to 1961.

⁷⁵ Ke, interview.

⁷⁶ Peng, interview.

⁷⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 92.

Hunker not only believed the self-supporting principle was necessary for church plants from the beginning, but he also evaluated the health of an existing church in light of the principle. In one place, he wrote, “A major testing point of an indigenous church is the ability to be financially self-supporting.”⁷⁸ In another place, he articulated, “Actually, self-support is God-support. It demands faith in God, but also faithfulness to God. Churches are both grateful to God and proud of themselves to be ‘on their own.’ Some are able to provide their own funds for beginning a new mission point.”⁷⁹ To Hunker, self-supporting was a matter of faith and stewardship. The churches had to believe God was able to provide, but they also had a responsibility to steward God’s resources well.

Self-propagating. Hunker also affirmed the self-propagation of indigenous churches.⁸⁰ He believed the first step towards self-propagating was standing on one’s own convictions. In other words, the church cannot be self-propagating if she has not first internalized and cultivated her own convictions in the faith. Hunker wrote,

Not only Christianity as a religion and not only local churches as institutions, but individual Christians must be able to stand alone. Any Christian whose faith is rooted in the friendship of another, whether Chinese or foreigner, will not long stand the test of separateness and aloneness required of Christ’s followers in a hostile environment.⁸¹

A church and her members must own their faith, or they will not last when difficulty comes.

Hunker’s second self-propagating test regarded healthy contextualization. He wrote, “[Many] regard Christianity with suspicion as a religion of the foreigner. To them

⁷⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 90.

⁷⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 92.

⁸⁰ Self-propagation is the ability to increase or grow without outside help.

⁸¹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 83.

Christianity has not become an accepted part of Chinese culture. A crucial task facing Chinese Christians is that of making their faith a part of the cultural fiber of their nation.”⁸² Hunker believed the key to self-propagating was to help Chinese churches integrate Chinese cultural distinctives that did not violate Christian Scripture. Becoming Chinese in characteristic and “flavor,” also regarded as healthy contextualization, did not mean one had to compromise biblical truth for cultural acceptance.⁸³ Hunker favored preaching, teaching, and singing in the language of the host people, and he modeled this approach even though he did not speak Mandarin well.

Hunker believed in the three-self principle, and he would often ask churches to pray that the Baptist churches in Taiwan would be indigenous and independent.⁸⁴ Indigeneity in the local church required indigenous leadership, cultural reflection, and autonomy from foreign support. Hunker cultivated indigenous churches in these three ways, and he evaluated the strength of a church based on the same three standards. While Hunker was committed to local church indigeneity, however, he also knew an indigenous convention was necessary for Taiwan Baptists to be faithful to the Great Commission.

Convention Indigeneity

The idea of a convention was not unique to Taiwan Baptists. The first Chinese Baptist convention started in Shanghai, China, in 1948.⁸⁵ “Eight years of [civil] war in China (1937–1945) scattered church members, destroyed property, and exhausted resources. After 1945, when Baptists began to return to ravished homes and to rebuild,

⁸² Hunker, *Taiwan*, 121.

⁸³ For more information on how Taiwan Baptist churches reflected Chinese characteristics, see Debra A. Weber, “Leading a Select Group to Address the Plateauing of Recent Baptist Churches in Taiwan” (DMin project, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997).

⁸⁴ Hunker, “Hit Team Interview,” March 25, 1976, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁸⁵ Chuang, interview.

they became aware of Christian unity on a national level,” explained Hunker.⁸⁶ Members of Baptist churches in Mainland China began to discuss the idea of a national Baptist convention. Hunker continued, “The idea was contagious. Prayer was made, plans [were] drawn, and an organizing convention called. In 1948, Baptist representatives from widely scattered areas met in Shanghai. They felt a part of history-in-the-making as they united themselves into the All-China Baptist Convention [ACBC].”⁸⁷

ACBC’s founding purpose was to bring “China to Christ” by sending missionaries throughout the country.⁸⁸ The convention formed a mission board and sent missionaries to begin a new Baptist work in Taiwan, which was a province of Mainland China at that time. Chinese pastor Yang Mei-Tsai and single FMB missionaries Lila Watson and Bertha Smith were the first missionaries sent to Taiwan.⁸⁹ Hunker explained, “Exploratory trips to Taiwan convinced them and other Southern Baptist missionaries that even in the face of Taiwan’s uncertain future, the time was ripe and the place right for lending a helping hand.”⁹⁰

Later in 1948, the growing forces of the Communist party forced missionaries to leave the mainland.⁹¹ Missionaries, such as Charles Culpepper Sr., relocated to Taipei to continue ministry with the Chinese. The missionaries were not alone, however. Due to the same threats made by the Communist army, many Chinese pastors also relocated to Taiwan. Taipei became the new capital of Chinese Baptist life, and the vision that began in China for a Chinese convention was reborn. In what follows, I describe Hunker’s

⁸⁶ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 13.

⁸⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 14.

⁸⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 14.

⁸⁹ Yang, Watson, and Smith arrived in Taiwan in 1948. See Hunker, *Taiwan*, 65. The ACBC sent Yang while the FMB sent Watson and Smith.

⁹⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 13–14.

⁹¹ Carl Hunker, “Oral History,” Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

commitment to convention indigeneity by showing how he helped establish a convention, cultivated a missional identity, and mentored convention leaders.

Hunker Helped Established a Convention

Hunker's commitment to indigeneity began with developing indigenous leaders who could lead indigenous churches, but he also knew the convention would need to reflect distinctly Chinese characteristics. Thus, Hunker was excited to be one of three men chosen to write the founding constitution of the Taiwan Baptist Convention, which was later renamed the Chinese Baptist Convention (CBC).⁹² In a letter to a friend in 1958, Hunker explained, "There is a strong movement among our Chinese people for indigeneity, and our hope is to guide this movement along healthy lines of expression."⁹³ To Hunker, a "healthy line of expression" was Baptist cooperation for the sake of missions.

As support for the convention grew, so did questions about the leadership structure. One of Hunker's disciples, Ke, explains,

Hunker played a vital role in whether or not [the convention] should establish the CBC first or the Baptist assembly first. At that time, the only denomination that had an assembly was the Presbyterians. We had to decide whether to have a convention or an assembly first. But Pastor Hunker said having an assembly was not part of the Bible's teaching, so we decided not to have an assembly. Hunker taught us that there should not be any organization that has more authority than the church.⁹⁴

Based on Hunker's guidance, the CBC underscored the importance of local church autonomy.

⁹² Carl Hunker, "Email to Linda Phillips," July 26, 2004, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

⁹³ Hunker, "Letter to Winston Crawley," February 26, 1958, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁹⁴ Ke, interview. The term "Baptist assembly" refers to the Presbyterian model. As first-generation Baptists, the young leaders knew no other model for church governance than what they had witnessed from the Presbyterians, who first came to Taiwan in 1860. See Hollington K. Tong, *Christianity in Taiwan: A History* (Taipei: China Post, 1961), 21.

As missionaries and CBC churches planted more churches, convention membership grew. Hunker noticed and rejoiced at the growing level of indigenous leadership in the convention when he gave the following praise: “Due to increased leadership in the churches and the convention by our national co-workers, the voice of the missionary was heard less in this year’s convention than at any previous convention.”⁹⁵ Hunker rightly observed that the decreasing voices of foreign missionaries were a positive sign for indigeneity in the convention. As time went on, the convention was less and less dependent on foreign resources and assistance.⁹⁶

Hunker recounted that the convention provided a sense of partnership between the many autonomous Baptists churches, especially for those planted in difficult areas. The convention served as a unifying vision for these churches. Hunker pointed out, “Young churches sometimes are nearly crushed by the burden of responsibility for the great numbers of non-Christians around them. In cooperation, there is strength. It is the convention that unites individual efforts.”⁹⁷ The churches understood there is strength in numbers, and they relied on one another for support and encouragement.

Taiwan Baptists knew the “Christians of no single church alone could carry the load of evangelization for their country.”⁹⁸ A convention allowed Taiwan Baptists to maximize their efforts to spread the gospel. Describing the mood of the convention in 1970, Hunker revealed, “The objective for [the convention] is still valid: cooperation for responsible evangelism. Through their convention, Chinese Baptists are saying, ‘We are a people with a mission. We have a compelling responsibility to our nation.’”⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Carl Hunker, “Annual Report,” December 1960, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁹⁶ Chuang, interview.

⁹⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 114.

⁹⁸ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 113.

⁹⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 114.

Hunker Cultivated a Missional Identity

Church planting on the island became one of the earliest displays of convention cooperation. Hunker reported,

One expression of convention concern is a program of home missions. In addition to many new preaching places opened by local churches, five or six new mission points [were] started by the convention. Work at each of them is difficult. Personnel is insufficient and not easy to enlist. Funds are never enough. But the mission points are significant. They represent the earnest concern of Christians who have a sense of responsibility for their own people.¹⁰⁰

In the early days, the missionaries took charge of planting churches, but as pastors were trained, the churches embraced this important responsibility.¹⁰¹

Missional emphasis began on the island in the form of new preaching points and church plants, but the missional emphasis eventually grew beyond a domestic focus to an international effort. As membership in the convention grew, the churches began sending missionaries. Hunker emphasized the importance of mission work to his seminary students.¹⁰² He knew the impact the seminary had on the churches who made up the convention and the important need his students could meet as missionaries:

From the churches the students have come, back to the churches they go. The seminary is the lifeline of leadership for the developing churches of Taiwan. And not for Taiwan only. Some have gone to other areas such as Malaysia, Thailand, and Korea. All are compelled by the deeper dimension of the proverb, “All men are one family.” Their response is their life.¹⁰³

The convention’s founding purpose was to strengthen churches, evangelize the island, and send missionaries. As students graduated and went overseas, Taiwan Baptists began to see the usefulness of the convention in sending out their own people.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 114. The term “mission points” refers to evangelistic centers established for outreach in new areas of engagement.

¹⁰¹ Chuang, interview.

¹⁰² Nien, interview.

¹⁰³ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 113.

¹⁰⁴ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Friends,” December 15, 1961, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

In an update letter in 1959, Hunker shared the progress the seminary and the convention had made. He informed, “In five years, more than eighty [students] have graduated from the seminary. These graduates are serving in places of responsibility all over Taiwan, in the twenty-one churches and the more than forty chapels. . . . Several are serving as missionaries under the sponsorship of the convention.”¹⁰⁵ Hunker’s emphasis on missions in the classroom, in his writing, and through his counsel to leaders cultivated a missional identity in the convention.¹⁰⁶

Hunker Mentored Convention Leaders

Hunker’s influence in the convention went beyond his influence in writing the constitution and serving as the vice-chairman for the first three years of the CBC. The convention leaders, who were Hunker’s former students, looked to him for advice and guidance. One missionary explains, “[Hunker] was also frequently counseling with convention leadership. Every major convention activity included Carl.”¹⁰⁷ Another colleague expounds, “He worked closely with all of the executive secretaries of the convention; they were all his students. He had a very close relationship with all of his students and all of the pastors.”¹⁰⁸ Hunker’s ongoing relationship with convention leadership demonstrated the lifelong influence he had on his students. No matter where they served after graduation, Hunker continued to counsel and develop them as leaders.

Yen Tzu-Nien believes Hunker’s greatest contribution to the CBC was as consultant to its leaders:

If we look at this from the viewpoint of history, then we have to say that [Hunker’s] influence [on the CBC] was mainly in a role as a consultant. The CBC originally

¹⁰⁵ Carl Hunker, “To the Glory of God,” 1959, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹⁰⁶ Chap. 4 further demonstrates how Hunker helped the CBC cultivate a missional identity.

¹⁰⁷ Winstead, interview.

¹⁰⁸ Phillips, interview.

consisted of eleven churches. Of the eleven churches, they were all influenced by Hunker. Although Dr. Hunker did not plant all eleven churches, his role in coordinating and working among the eleven churches had a deep influence on the CBC. His idea that all the churches and the CBC should be united as one entity has been very influential on me.¹⁰⁹

Although Hunker served the convention as vice-chairman for its first three years, he transferred the leadership responsibilities of that office to a national leader as soon as possible. Accordingly, he remained willing to help. As his students graduated and took on new leadership roles, Hunker continued to guide them as a trusted advisor.

Another tangible way Hunker demonstrated a commitment to indigeneity in the convention was by faithfully attending the annual meeting to support indigenous leadership.¹¹⁰ Just as the American SBC holds an annual meeting to vote on and discuss convention-wide matters, so also does the CBC. Attending the convention allowed Hunker to develop life-long mentoring relationships with convention leaders, as well as pastors who attended the annual meeting. Jim Graham explains, “At the time Hunker retired, he had mentored the majority of Baptist pastors on the island due to his position and influence at the seminary.”¹¹¹ Graham continues, “Most of the leaders of the convention over the last twenty years are people that he taught, mentored, and developed. . . . He left his mark on the convention and the churches.”¹¹²

Hunker’s disciples noticed his commitment to indigeneity, too. Yen expresses his appreciation for Hunker’s commitment to indigeneity, explaining that Hunker set the example for how missionaries and Taiwan Baptist leaders should work together as equal partners.¹¹³ Yen understood Hunker’s theology and philosophy drove him to raise up,

¹⁰⁹ Tzu-Nien Yen, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020.

¹¹⁰ Tsai, interview.

¹¹¹ Jim Graham, telephone interview by author, February 27, 2020.

¹¹² Graham, interview.

¹¹³ Yen, interview.

equip, empower, and encourage Chinese leaders, leading a former TBTS professor to say, “Hunker’s students have now become the backbone of the Taiwan Baptist Church.”¹¹⁴

Another Chinese pastor also notes the need for missionaries today to follow Hunker’s example by working as co-equals in the missionary task. Chuang Huai-Su explains that the missionaries were the leaders when the CBC started, but as leaders developed, ministry responsibilities transferred from the missionary to the local leader. Eventually, missionaries and national leaders were co-equals.¹¹⁵ Chuang and Yen agree that Hunker set the example missionaries and Chinese leaders should follow.

In conclusion, Hunker’s commitment to indigeneity influenced the Baptist convention by helping establish the convention, guiding it towards a missional identity, and mentoring young convention leaders. His influence empowered a generation of leaders to carry the vision forward. The convention formed to strengthen churches, evangelize the lost, and send missionaries. Hunker’s commitment to indigeneity and his ability to develop leaders equipped the CBC to fulfill its founding purpose. However, Hunker demonstrated his commitment to indigeneity in one more significant way: the seminary.

Seminary Indigeneity

From the start of TBTS in 1952, the Baptist missionaries hoped the seminary would one day host an indigenous faculty, teach an indigenous curriculum, and produce an indigenous president. While many FMB missionaries shared that vision and contributed towards that cause, Hunker was instrumental in accomplishing that goal, especially in the eighteen years he served as TBTS president.

¹¹⁴ Chih-Hsin Chang, email interview by author, May 20, 2020.

¹¹⁵ Huai-Su Chuang, interview by author, Taoyuan, Taiwan, March 20, 2020.

William Carey influenced Hunker's commitment to indigeneity. I have already explained how Carey's concentration-and-diffusion principle influenced Hunker's philosophy of missions, but Hunker's research on Carey impacted him in more than one way.¹¹⁶ For example, Carey's emphasis on formal theological education at Serampore College set an example for Hunker as he assumed leadership at TBTS.¹¹⁷ Hunker embodied Carey's emphasis on training national leadership through formal education and practical ministry experience.¹¹⁸

In this section, I explain how Hunker demonstrated his commitment to indigeneity at the seminary, which he saw as a lifeline for the Baptist churches in Taiwan and abroad.¹¹⁹ Hunker rightly knew that for the local churches and the convention to have an indigenous identity, it would take a generation of indigenous Baptist leaders. Like Carey in Serampore, Hunker devoted himself to the seminary and the training of indigenous leadership. In what follows, I describe Hunker's commitment to seminary indigeneity by demonstrating how he cultivated an indigenous faculty, developed an indigenous curriculum, and empowered an indigenous president.

Hunker Cultivated an Indigenous Faculty

Hunker believed that the "hope for the future of the seminary lies with the Chinese members of the faculty, dedicated to a lifetime of service among their own people."¹²⁰ Yet, developing a spiritually mature and academically qualified indigenous faculty was a challenge. In response to God's grace in helping FMB missionaries cultivate an indigenous faculty, Hunker boasted, "Seldom on the mission field is it

¹¹⁶ See chap. 2 for an explanation of Carey's concentration-and-diffusion principle.

¹¹⁷ Hunker, "The Influence of William Carey," 156.

¹¹⁸ Hunker, "The Influence of William Carey," 157.

¹¹⁹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 113.

¹²⁰ Hunker, "Taiwan Baptist Seminary Faculty," 3.

possible to find a faculty that is well-trained while at the same time adequately representing the national constituency. But this is one of the blessings for which Taiwan Baptists are most grateful.”¹²¹

When the seminary began in 1952, there were only three full-time faculty members, two FMB missionaries and one Chinese national.¹²² Five years later, in 1957, the seminary had six full-time faculty members, three FMB missionaries and three Chinese nationals.¹²³ As the seminary grew in number, so did the faculty; however, fellowship between the Chinese faculty members was not always harmonious. In a letter to FMB leadership in 1959, Hunker wrote, “Dr. Culpepper and I are concerned about the future of the seminary. Even though we have three strong Chinese men on our faculty, the relationship between the three is such that there is always a problem of fellowship.”¹²⁴ However, with slow and steady perseverance, the seminary faculty grew to twelve full-time faculty members by 1970. Hunker wrote, “Eight of the twelve faculty members are Chinese. All are unusually well-prepared for their task. The curriculum and degree program is suited to the needs of the culture. Training is hard; for the future work of these young leaders is hard.”¹²⁵

Developing Chinese faculty members was critical to Hunker, for he knew being a seminary professor was a difficult task that required years of academic determination. To cultivate qualified seminary professors, Hunker used seminary funds to support advanced study for professors, which often took professors to Southern Baptist

¹²¹ Hunker, “Taiwan Baptist Seminary Faculty,” 3.

¹²² Hunker, “Taiwan Baptist Seminary Faculty,” 3.

¹²³ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Hix,” December 16, 1957, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹²⁴ Carl Hunker, “Letter to Winston Crawley,” July 5, 1959, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹²⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 110.

seminaries in the United States, such as The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS).¹²⁶

When asked how Hunker developed Chinese faculty members, one former TBTS professor explains that Hunker screened students he felt had the potential to be competent professors.¹²⁷ The seminary would then send those students to Baptist seminaries to complete doctoral work. The students were then expected to return and teach three to five years at the seminary.¹²⁸

Investing in the futures of young students paid off. Debbie Weber explains, “During Dr. Chang’s tenure of [1981] to 1998, I saw the faculty go from half Chinese and half [International Mission Board] missionaries to fully Chinese teaching faculty.”¹²⁹ After students completed doctoral degrees abroad, they returned to Taiwan to invest their lives in the next generation of students. The tradition of completing doctoral degrees abroad and returning to teach continues to this day.¹³⁰

Hunker Developed an Indigenous Curriculum

When Hunker became TBTS president, he made curriculum development one of his top priorities.¹³¹ Revising the curriculum was a long-term goal. For example, as part of his 1977 annual goals, he placed curriculum development as his fourth-highest

¹²⁶ Winston Crawley, “Letter to Carl Hunker,” September 30, 1965, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹²⁷ Tseng, interview.

¹²⁸ Phillips, interview.

¹²⁹ Debbie Weber, email interview by author, March 11, 2020.

¹³⁰ Tsai, interview.

¹³¹ Ai-Hua Li, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 10, 2020.

priority of the year.¹³² Tsai explains that Hunker wanted to contextualize the curriculum for the Chinese.¹³³ Hunker believed that TBTS needed a curriculum written by Chinese scholars for Chinese students in order for his students to be best equipped to serve the Chinese church.

In my interviews, I asked how Hunker revised the curriculum to better serve the Chinese students. According to Chang Chen-Kuang, Li Ai-Hua, and Linda Phillips, Hunker delegated this initiative to Chow Lien-Hwa, whom Hunker trusted completely.¹³⁴ Ron Winstead confirms this point, explaining,

The seminary curriculum was reworked in the early 70s before we arrived. The prime mover in the revision was Dr. Chow Lien-Hwa. Dr. Hunker depended on Dr. Chow for Chinese cultural issues. Dr. Chow was a noted Chinese scholar and theologian who had a broad knowledge of Chinese history and culture. Dr. Hunker sought Chow's opinion on most issues related to [the] contextualization of the gospel and administration issues. Dr. Hunker was committed to making the seminary a truly Chinese seminary, and he believed the Chinese could do this better than any foreigner.¹³⁵

While Chow was the primary contributor, he and Hunker worked closely together.¹³⁶

Hunker's commitment to indigeneity led him to prioritize a contextualized curriculum. He believed the seminary existed for the churches, and the best way to serve the churches was to provide the students with a relevant curriculum that best prepared them for church leadership.¹³⁷

¹³² Carl Hunker, "Annual Goals Assessment," December 1977, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹³³ Tsai, interview.

¹³⁴ See Chen-Kuang Chang, interview; Ai-Hua Li, interview; Phillips, interview.

¹³⁵ Winstead, interview.

¹³⁶ Phillips shares that some convention pastors were concerned with Chow's interest in liberal theology. It is unknown to what extent Chow's liberalism influenced the revisions of the curriculum.

¹³⁷ Tsai, interview.

Hunker Empowered an Indigenous President

Hunker planned from the beginning of his ministry in Taiwan to find and train a Chinese national who could lead the seminary forward. LeRoy Hogue explains, “[Hunker] had a desire, a picture of what the seminary ought to be. [Hunker was always looking] forward to the time when [the seminary] had a national [leader] who would take over as the administrator, the president of the seminary.”¹³⁸ The United States’ decision to withdraw support from Taiwan and officially recognize the government of the People’s Republic of China as the sole legal government of China in 1978 validated Hunker’s urgency to find an indigenous seminary president.¹³⁹

Finding a qualified and willing man to serve as president proved to be more difficult than Hunker imagined. In a letter to FMB leadership in 1979, Hunker shared how his desire to find an indigenous president became “sharper in focus” over the previous three to four years.¹⁴⁰ He went on to explain the seminary’s failed attempt to convince Baptist pastor and seminary professor Chow Lien-Hwa to be president. The seminary faculty unanimously recommended Chow to become the next president of the seminary, but Chow felt he was too old and had too many writing responsibilities to effectively serve as seminary president.¹⁴¹ The seminary had many young students who showed strong potential, but “their age and lack of experience makes it difficult to consider any of them for the presidency.”¹⁴²

¹³⁸ Hogue, interview.

¹³⁹ John Tkacik, “Stating America’s Case to China’s Hu Jintao: A Primer on U.S.-China-Taiwan Policy,” The Heritage Foundation, April 26, 2002, <https://www.heritage.org/asia/report/stating-americas-case-chinas-hu-jintao-primer-us-china-taiwan-policy/#pgfld=1019025>.

¹⁴⁰ Carl Hunker, “Letter to George Hays,” March 3, 1979, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹⁴¹ Hunker, “Letter to George Hays,” March 3, 1979.

¹⁴² Hunker, “Letter to George Hays,” March 3, 1979.

When Chow declined, Hunker felt pressure from the convention to continue as acting president while they searched for a suitable candidate. Hunker resisted this plan, fearing it would undermine the seminary's ability to name an indigenous president. In a letter to FMB leadership in 1980, Hunker wrote that he was willing to retire early to force the convention to elect a Chinese president.¹⁴³ Hunker believed TBTS acting dean Chang Chen-Kuang was the right choice to be president.¹⁴⁴

Chang became interim president in 1978, but the trustee board would not approve him to be acting president until he completed his doctoral degree.¹⁴⁵ After Chang completed his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in 1981, the trustee board and convention leadership named him the third president of TBTS.¹⁴⁶ In a year-end letter to friends, Hunker rejoiced in Chang's appointment, saying,

We are most grateful that God has heard our prayer to provide a Chinese president for our seminary. For years we have been praying for and planning for a Chinese president but were unable to find that person whom we felt was God's choice. During the past two years, however, the Lord's will has been more and more clear to us in His preparing one of our own professors, Chang Chen-Kuang to be our new president.¹⁴⁷

Hunker expressed genuine thankfulness and excitement for Chang.

Chang had experience as the student director and later as dean of students, but he never thought he would be president.¹⁴⁸ After consulting with Hunker and Chow, Chang accepted the trustees' offer to become the first Chinese president of TBTS.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴³ Carl Hunker, "Letter to George Hays," January 25, 1980, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹⁴⁴ Hunker, "Letter to George Hays," January 25, 1980.

¹⁴⁵ Hunker, "Letter to George Hays," January 25, 1980.

¹⁴⁶ Chen-Kuang Chang, interview.

¹⁴⁷ Carl Hunker, "Letter to Friends," September 1981, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹⁴⁸ Chen-Kuang Chang, interview. The student director monitored the overall health of the student body.

¹⁴⁹ Chen-Kuang Chang, interview.

Once he was appointed, Chang asked Hunker to stay on as a faculty member to help with the transition and to mentor young professors, a request Hunker gladly accepted. Hunker confessed, “I have enjoyed helping as acting academic dean this year and working with the younger professors, training [them] as they gradually assume more and more responsibility in the administration and teaching programs of the seminary.”¹⁵⁰ Hunker completed his term, developing the future professors of the seminary.

In conclusion, Hunker was committed to seminary indigeneity. He believed the seminary was a lifeline for the local church and the best way for his students to serve the Chinese church was to have a quality education. He demonstrated his commitment to seminary indigeneity by cultivating an indigenous faculty, developing an indigenous curriculum, and empowering an indigenous president.

Conclusion

Hunker believed that “mission work on any foreign field follows a rather definite pattern of progress: preaching and evangelism, the training of new Christians, the organization of new churches, then, the providing of a trained national leadership for the churches and institutions.”¹⁵¹ Hunker committed to training indigenous leadership, and he maintained that commitment throughout his missionary service, leading one former professor to say, “Hunker’s students have now become the backbone of the Taiwan Baptist Church.”¹⁵²

Hunker also set the example for how missionaries and national leaders should serve together as co-equals. Hunker was not afraid to plant and pastor new churches, but he was intentional to equip and empower a national leader as soon as possible. Further,

¹⁵⁰ Carl Hunker, “Personal Report,” December 1981, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

¹⁵¹ Hunker, “Taiwan Baptist Seminary Faculty,” 3–4.

¹⁵² Chih-Hsin Chang, interview.

Hunker demonstrated his commitment to empower national leaders as the senior pastor of ASBC, the vice-president of the CBC, and the president of TBTS. Each time Hunker vacated a leadership position, he passed the leadership baton and empowered a national leader to take his place.

To explain Hunker's commitment to indigeneity, I first showed Hunker's commitment to local church indigeneity by detailing how he developed local leaders, emphasized contextualization to reflect the local culture, and evaluated the health of a church based on the three-self principles. Second, I explained Hunker's commitment to convention indigeneity, which he proved by helping establish the convention, guiding it towards a missional identity, and mentoring young convention leaders. Third, I showed Hunker's commitment to seminary indigeneity, which he demonstrated at TBTS by cultivating an indigenous faculty, developing an indigenous curriculum, and empowering an indigenous president to lead the seminary forward. In the concluding chapter, I identify Hunker's missiological principles and summarize the four major components that made him influential in the life and history of Taiwan Baptists.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

God used Carl Hunker to influence the life and history of Taiwan Baptists. At the time the Foreign Mission Board (FMB) appointed Hunker as a cross-cultural missionary in 1946, he never considered serving in Taiwan, for FMB missions in Taiwan had not yet begun. God used Hunker's experience in and expulsion from Suzhou, China, to prepare him for ministry in Taiwan. Hunker faithfully served with the FMB for forty years, giving thirty-four years to Taiwan.¹ He left behind a legacy of leaders who were and remain convictionally Baptist. He also set an example worthy of study and reflection.

This dissertation has sought to explain why Hunker was influential in the life and history of Taiwan Baptists. Having done so, I hope to raise awareness about Hunker's significance and promote the principles he utilized—principles that influenced his disciples and colleagues. In this concluding chapter, therefore, I summarize my method and findings, identify Hunker's missiological principles, recommend inquiries for further research, and share my personal reflections.

Many cross-cultural missionaries have served in Taiwan, but not all have made the kind of impact Hunker did. He had a special quality that continues to captivate people sixty-five years after he began his mission work in Taiwan. My primary research question in this dissertation was "What made Hunker an influential leader in the history of Taiwan Baptists?" Thus, my thesis was the following: Hunker was an influential leader in the

¹ Hunker served on TBTS faculty from 1952 to 1983 and again from 1985 to 1986. He served as TBTS vice president from 1952 to 1963 and as president from 1963 to 1981. See Carl Hunker, "Information Questionnaire," November 17, 1970, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

history of Taiwan Baptists because of his genuine care for the people, passion for the lost, understanding of culture, and commitment to indigeneity.

I conducted research in three ways. First, I gathered all of Hunker's primary sources. Hunker did not write extensively. Outside of his Th.D. dissertation on William Carey at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS), Hunker's only other significant work was a book he wrote in 1970 called *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution* and a small booklet for new believers.² In addition to Hunker's published works, I collected all archival information on Hunker from SBTS, the Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary (TBTS), the International Mission Board (IMB), and the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives (SBHLA).

Second, I gathered a large number of secondary sources that served to explain Hunker's context and influence.³ Third, I interviewed thirty-four people. Of those interviewed, ten were Hunker's missionary colleagues, twenty-one were Hunker's direct disciples, two were Hunker's children, and one is the current executive director of the Chinese Baptist Convention (CBC), who spoke to Hunker's lasting impact on today's work. Qualitative interviewing enabled me to probe Hunker's life by hearing from those who knew him best.

Summary

In chapter 1, I introduced Hunker, stated my research question, and explained the process I used to conduct research. I expressed my personal interest in Hunker's life and ministry and explained why they were worthy of study. Further, I explained qualitative research, introduced my interviewees, and specified delimitations.

² W. Carl Hunker, *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1970); Hunker, *Lessons for New Christians* (Hong Kong: Baptist Press, 1953).

³ See bibliography for a complete list of secondary sources.

Chapter 2 demonstrated Hunker's significance in the life and history of Taiwan Baptists by familiarizing readers with Hunker's background. By providing a short biographical survey of Hunker's life before, during, and after his tenure in Taiwan, I demonstrated Hunker's impact on his students, the churches, the CBC, and the seminary.

Chapter 3 demonstrated how Hunker's care for people influenced the life and history of Taiwan Baptists. In each interview I conducted, I asked the question "How did Hunker demonstrate care for people?" By asking this question, four aspects of his care for people came to light.

First, my research revealed the focus of Hunker's care. Hunker cared about people's personal spiritual lives, their families, and their churches. To demonstrate this point, I examined each focus and provided examples of Hunker's care in each way.

The second aspect that came to light was Hunker's way of expressing care. His disciples and missionary colleagues did not feel like ministry projects or tasks; they knew Hunker genuinely cared about who they were and how they were doing. He demonstrated his care in simple, practical ways.

Third, my research revealed how many of Hunker's disciples made the connection between his genuine care for them and his character. My research revealed three character qualities that Hunker's disciples recognized in him: humility, servanthood, and a strong work ethic. By making the connection between Hunker's character and his care for them, Hunker's disciples more gladly trusted his intentions and allowed him to care for them.

The fourth aspect my research revealed was the influence Hunker's care had on his disciples and missionary colleagues. The recipients of Hunker's care imitated his example. Hunker did not direct his disciples to imitate his example; rather, his disciples imitated his example naturally, understanding the impact care has on a person.⁴

⁴ Ching-En Tseng, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 12, 2020.

Chapter 4 showed how Hunker's passion for evangelism influenced the life of Taiwan Baptists. Hunker was an avid evangelist, and he tried to prioritize "personal witnessing" in his annual goals.⁵ I demonstrated Hunker's passion for evangelism in five ways.

First, I exhibited Hunker's passion for reaching people. Hunker believed a person's greatest need was the gospel, and he loved telling people about Jesus. He did not care about race, socio-economic background, or education level; he just wanted to make Christ known. He loved leading people to Jesus.

Second, I presented Hunker's desire to reach Taiwan with the gospel. Although Taiwan had a great zeal for the gospel when he first arrived, conversion rates slowed over time.⁶ He knew saturating Taiwan island with the gospel would require his setting an example, training others, and establishing a convention for cooperation among Baptist churches.

Third, I showed Hunker's belief that Taiwan Baptists were the best positioned to engage Mainland China with the gospel.⁷ He expected the mainland to reopen in his lifetime, and he wanted Taiwan Baptist churches and American Baptist churches to be ready. Referring to Taiwan as an "isle of hope," he called on Taiwan Baptists to be ready to "speak the Christian message of hope."⁸

Fourth, I contended Hunker believed that the Chinese had a responsibility to reach their own no matter where they were in the world. Hunker estimated there were eighteen million Chinese living outside Mainland China, and he called on Taiwan

⁵ Carl Hunker, "Annual Review," 1977, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA

⁶ Carl Hunker and Jeanette Hunker, "Christmas Letter," 1975, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

⁷ Hunker, *Taiwan*, vi.

⁸ Carl Hunker, "Formosa: Isle of Hope," Carl Hunker Collection, SBHLA.

Baptists to make Taiwan a missions-sending epicenter to engage the Chinese diaspora.⁹ Hunker defined Taiwan Christians' "unfinished task" in terms of Christian regeneration.¹⁰

Fifth, Hunker demonstrated his passion for evangelism in how he contextualized the gospel. He believed the job of the evangelist included knowing the cultural and religious worldview of the person with whom one is sharing. He understood how Confucian values influenced the Chinese worldview, and he used Bible stories, like the parable of the prodigal son, to communicate the gospel to his Chinese listeners.¹¹

Chapter 5 demonstrated Hunker's desire to know and participate in the local culture throughout his tenure as a cross-cultural missionary. He sought to be like the Chinese as much as possible, and his Chinese disciples and missionary colleagues noticed. To demonstrate Hunker's understanding of culture, I divided the chapter into five sections. First, I showed how Hunker's assimilation into the Chinese culture caused his national disciples to feel like he was one of them, making it easier for them to relate to and trust him. Second, I showed how Hunker's understanding of Chinese history helped him to understand the cultural worldview of the people, how Hunker understood Taiwan's relationship with the mainland, how three million Chinese refugees impacted Taiwan culture, and how Taiwan's political system favored congregationalism in the local church.

Third, I explained how Hunker's understanding of Chinese cultural values enabled him to foster strong relationships with students and young leaders. He understood how Confucian philosophy undergirded all of Chinese culture. As a careful cultural observer, Hunker affirmed and embraced the philosophical elements of

⁹ Rei-Yi Tsai, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020; Hunker, *Taiwan*, 122.

¹⁰ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 109.

¹¹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 64.

Confucianism that reinforced a biblical worldview, such as properly honoring one's parents. Further, because Hunker understood Confucianism, he made sense of Chinese values such as group-orientation, family, relationship, face, holidays, and gift-giving. Understanding and participating in these biblically neutral cultural values and expressions helped Hunker remove cultural barriers and build influence with the local people.

Fourth, I showed how Hunker's understanding of the three mainline religions helped him minister in Taiwan. The "Three Teachings" are Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism.¹² Hunker understood that the average practitioner did not give exclusive allegiance to one system; thus, it was difficult for locals to accept the exclusivity of Christ. Understanding each of these three teachings better enabled Hunker to contextualize the gospel to the people.

Fifth, I demonstrated Hunker's understanding of local folk religion, which is a combination of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism undergirded by Chinese animism.¹³ Hunker knew the average person worshiped ancestors, feared spirits, and participated in superstitious rituals to manipulate local deities; thus, he trained a generation of students to present the gospel clearly.

Hunker's understanding of culture helped him to influence Taiwan Baptists in a different way than his care for people, passion for the lost, and commitment to indigeneity. By understanding Taiwan's history, values, mainline religions, and religious worldview, namely, how animism undergirded Chinese folk religion, Hunker significantly influenced his students. While not an expert on any of these areas, he demonstrated a good understanding, which helped him to participate in the local culture,

¹² Joseph A. Adler, *Chinese Religious Traditions* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 13–14.

¹³ Adler, *Chinese Religions Traditions*, 113.

remove cultural barriers, build relationships, and influence the life and history of Taiwan Baptists.

Chapter 6 demonstrated Hunker's commitment to indigeneity. I first showed Hunker's commitment to local church indigeneity by demonstrating how he developed local leaders, emphasized contextualization to reflect the local culture, and evaluated the health of a church based on the three-self principle. Second, I showed Hunker's commitment to convention indigeneity, which he demonstrated by helping establish the CBC, guiding the CBC towards a missional identity, and mentoring young CBC leaders. Third, I showed Hunker's commitment to seminary indigeneity, which he demonstrated at TBTS by cultivating an indigenous faculty, developing an indigenous curriculum, and empowering an indigenous president to lead the seminary forward.

Missiological Reflections Based on Hunker's Principles

Missionaries stand on the shoulders of those who came before them. One contention of this dissertation has been that Hunker's missiology has significant application for all cross-cultural missionaries. Identifying the principles that allowed Hunker to gain and hold profound influence in the lives of his disciples better equips missionaries to minister cross-culturally.¹⁴ In this section, I identify Hunker's ministry principles and provide twelve missiological reflections based on those principles.

Hunker Prioritized Prayer

Hunker's disciples, colleagues, and family members recognized his devotion to prayer. Hunker's daughter, Joyce Lynn, speaks of his prayer journals where he recorded the names of those for whom he prayed over the decades.¹⁵ Linda Phillips shares he

¹⁴ Hunker never states he followed a certain list of principles. The twelve principles stated in this section are my observations from his life and ministry.

¹⁵ Joyce Lynn Maslin, email interview by author, February 29, 2020.

prayed daily for churches and former students by going city by city from the top of Taiwan island to the bottom.¹⁶ Joyce Lynn adds that prayer was the “underpinning” of all her father did.¹⁷

Hunker was also known for meeting with a different student every morning to pray. He asked how he could pray for the student’s studies, family, and ministry. After a short Bible devotional, he knelt with the student in prayer, using a worn prayer mat to soften the pressure on their knees as they knelt on the floor together. Upon retiring, he took two prayer mats back to Kansas City with him. Prayer was an important element in Hunker’s personal and professional life; it undergirded all he did.

Like Hunker before them, missionaries today must prioritize prayer for both the work and themselves. Ephesians 6:11 charges every Christian to put on the full armor of God. Paul explains, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:12). Paul exhorts his readers to pray “at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication” for all the saints and for himself—that he will proclaim the gospel boldly (Eph 6:18–19). Prayer is essential to push back spiritual darkness as the missionary engages in a spiritual battle.

Hunker Informed His Prayer Supporters

Hunker not only recognized the importance of his personal prayer life; he also valued the prayers of others. In personal letters Hunker wrote to FMB leadership in the home office and his personal prayer supporters, he routinely thanked supporters, shared prayer requests, and provided updates on the ministry in Taiwan, sharing both praises and

¹⁶ Linda Phillips, telephone interview by author, March 13, 2020.

¹⁷ Maslin, interview.

concerns.¹⁸ He believed keeping prayer advocates informed of his personal life, family, and ministry in Taiwan was important. Not only did Hunker write an annual report to supporters, which he would have typed on a typewriter; he also made it his practice to provide regular updates in his normal correspondences with the FMB home office and field leadership. He was intentional to ask others to pray for him and the work.

Perhaps Hunker's best example of informing his supporters of the needs in Taiwan was his book *Taiwan: Unfinished Revolution*. In this book, he shared his vision for Taiwan to be a missions-sending base for global missions. He informed his readers in the United States how to pray for the church in Taiwan.

Although Hunker kept his supporters updated on the work, he did not share about his personal achievements, such as becoming seminary president. He did, however, celebrate students who were developing into young leaders, churches that were growing, and advancement in the work.¹⁹ He rejoiced in the accomplishments of others.

Missionaries today must likewise be intentional to communicate with prayer advocates, which involves finding creative ways to captivate the attention of their supporters and present simple prayer requests.²⁰ Missions can be lonely work. Enlisting prayer supporters is not only necessary for the advancement of the gospel but also good for the workers.

¹⁸ Carl Hunker and Jeanette Hunker, "Letter to Friends," November 24, 1953, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

¹⁹ Carl Hunker, "Letter to Dr. George Hayes," January 25, 1980, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

²⁰ Missionaries can captivate the attention of prayer supports, for example, by sharing high-quality videos and telling compelling stories.

Hunker Appreciated the Local Culture

Hunker loved Chinese culture.²¹ His deep appreciation for the culture changed him, prompting one disciple to say, “He is so Chinese. I did not feel like he was a foreigner.”²² Hunker embraced the local culture and sought to live as the Chinese lived.²³ He especially took interest in the local holidays, seeking to incorporate Christian meaning without changing the essence, unless, of course, the holiday or rituals associated with the holiday contradicted the teaching of God’s Word.²⁴

Hunker also sought to understand, though not conform to, the local religion.²⁵ He knew understanding a person’s religious worldview was necessary to share the gospel in a way the person could understand. He was careful to view every element of culture through a biblical lens. In the same way, missionaries today should desire to become experts on the local culture in which they live and serve, including knowing the religious worldview of the people. Though it is unwise for followers of Christ to appreciate everything about a culture, missionaries should seek to understand all they can, which will enable them to more effectively contextualize the gospel and present the message as clearly as possible.

Hunker Cared Well for People

Hunker was not the most charismatic person, nor did he have the best Mandarin speaking ability, but he genuinely cared for people, and they knew it. When asked how Hunker became so influential in the lives of so many, Tsai Rei-Yi responded,

²¹ Tseng, interview.

²² Hsiu-Mei Chang, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020.

²³ Tseng, interview.

²⁴ Ai-Hua Li, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 10, 2020.

²⁵ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 79.

“We knew he cared about us.”²⁶ Hunker was able to build personal relationships with his Chinese mentees because there was no doubt in their minds of his love and concern for them.

Hunker’s care for people was genuine, meaning he did not simply show concern so he could gain a favorable outcome. He cared for people with sincere affection. Glenda Cook explains, “It was easy to see that he loved God and loved the Taiwanese people. . . . They were not evangelism targets or statistics. They were people precious to God and for whom Christ died. His love for the people was infectious.”²⁷ Hunker’s disciples trusted him and allowed him to influence their lives because they knew he genuinely cared for them.

Hunker also demonstrated sincere care for the spiritual lives of his disciples. He was careful to ask the heart motives of his disciples when they participated in holiday and family.²⁸ Knowing ancestor worship was the most common characteristic of the local folk religion, he counseled disciples to judge their heart motives before partaking in cultural activities—especially activities that included honoring ancestors. Hunker never told disciples what to or not to do, but he often asked what their motivation was before they partook in rituals.

In ministry, the temptation to treat people as ministry “targets” without caring well for their souls is real.²⁹ Hunker cared for people because he genuinely valued them. Missionaries today should care for those God has placed in their lives because doing so is honoring to the person and to God. Hunker modeled that consistency in care, and missionaries would do well to do the same.

²⁶ Tsai, interview.

²⁷ Glenda Cook, email interview by author, March 14, 2020.

²⁸ Duan Lin, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, February 26, 2020.

²⁹ Cook, interview.

Hunker Built Comradery through Humor

Hunker's humor was one of the qualities his disciples appreciated most about him.³⁰ He used humor to cultivate relationships with others, calm missionaries, diffuse conflict, reflect humility, and encourage nationals to be themselves around him. His disciples and colleagues grew to appreciate his humor, and it remains one of the qualities they miss most about him.

Evangelism and church planting are difficult tasks; gospel ministry in general is serious work. The missionary who takes him or herself too seriously will struggle. Hunker's use of humor was a helpful tactic for longevity on the field, for he was able to find humor even in unpleasant situations. Missionaries today can also build comradery with nationals and alleviate stress through a healthy sense of humor.

Hunker Ministered in the Local Language

Hunker was committed to learning and ministering in the local language. He never achieved superior language skills, yet he never stopped growing in language ability. For example, upon arriving in Suzhou, China, in 1946, he immediately began language study and was able to preach his first sermon in the local dialect after two years.³¹

When he relocated to the Philippines, Hunker began studying Mandarin and achieved basic fluency in two years, which allowed him to minister to the Mandarin-speaking population of Taiwan.³² Once in Taiwan, he preached in churches, trained national leaders, and taught at the seminary using Mandarin. He taught a variety of

³⁰ LeRoy Hogue, telephone interview by author, March 3, 2020.

³¹ Winston Crawley, "Biographical Sketch: William Carl Hunker," 1998, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

³² Linda Phillips, *Reflections of the Glory of God: Biographical Sketches of Taiwan Baptists Co-Workers* (Taipei: Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002), 87.

courses at the seminary, which forced him to be a lifelong language learner. Missionaries today should seek to grow in language proficiency while appreciating the fact that superior language skills are not always necessary to impact a generation of church leaders.

Hunker Concentrated on Taipei

William Carey was the focus of Hunker's Th.D. dissertation.³³ One of Hunker's salient insights on Carey was Carey's concentration-and-diffusion principle.³⁴ Carey made Serampore the epicenter of his ministry. He preached, taught, and trained in Serampore and mobilized national workers to take the gospel from Serampore to the surrounding area. By basing out of Serampore over his missionary tenure, Carey impacted a wide area by "diffusing" his disciples outward.

Hunker adopted that same approach in Taiwan, making Taipei the epicenter of his missionary activity. By concentrating on Taipei for thirty-three years, Hunker built a base of disciples that "diffused" to other areas as the Lord called. As seminary president, Hunker visited his disciples all over Taiwan island, yet the focus of his ministry remained in Taipei. He used his position as seminary president to raise up a generation of pastors and church leaders, knowing God would use his investment in Taipei to meet needs in Taiwan and wherever Chinese people settled throughout Asia.

Missionaries today do not always have the opportunity to concentrate on one place long-term. For example, it may be uncommon for a missionary to be in one place for thirty-three years, like Hunker. As much as missionaries and sending agencies can control, however, they should value longevity in one place as an important quality of the

³³ Carl Hunker, "The Influence of William Carey on the Principles of Subsequent Missions" (ThD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1946).

³⁴ Hunker, "The Influence of William Carey," 141–42.

missionary task.³⁵ Developing a long-term comprehensive urban strategy is an effective way to reach many people groups in one city and “diffuse” outward, possibly back to their homes as the Lord calls.

Hunker Embraced His Chinese Co-Workers as Equal Partners

In his 1967 annual report, Hunker stated, “A most satisfying experience has been that of working with the members of our Preparation Committee and with all of our co-workers, both Chinese and missionary, in the Sunday School Crusade. It was a rich personal blessing and one that taught me much, which I know I can use in my future work for the Lord.”³⁶ While Hunker had tremendous influence on his disciples, he always saw them as equals in the work.³⁷

Missionaries today must be careful to not consider themselves superior to their national partners. While missionaries play an important role in the missionary task, they must remain humble and teachable, knowing they can learn as much—if not more—from their local brothers and sisters in the faith. Hunker rightly understood his disciples as equal partners in the task, and he was not ashamed to ask for help when he was in need.³⁸ Further, he was not ashamed to serve under their leadership. For example, Hunker stayed at TBTS as a professor under the new national president’s leadership to assist as needed.³⁹

³⁵ The longer a missionary is in one place, the more effective he or she will be to build deep relationships with national partners in that location.

³⁶ Carl Hunker, “Annual Report,” 1967, Carl Hunker Collection, IMBA.

³⁷ Tzu-Nien Yen, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 31, 2020.

³⁸ Huai-Su Chuang, interview by author, Taoyuan, Taiwan, March 20, 2020.

³⁹ Chen-Kuang Chang, interview by author, New Taipei City, Taiwan, March 24, 2020.

Hunker Followed a Comprehensive Strategy

In an article for *Taiwan Journal*, Hunker wrote, “Mission work on any foreign field follows a rather definite pattern of progress: preaching and evangelism, the training of new Christians, the organization of new churches, then, the providing of a trained national leadership for the churches and institutions.”⁴⁰ Hunker followed a comprehensive strategy, believing that the job of the missionary included not only evangelism, discipleship, church planting, and leadership development but also two important elements: Hunker and his contemporaries saw the importance of an indigenous Baptist seminary and convention.⁴¹

David Bosch’s *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* is a book that has shaped the minds of missiologists for the past thirty years.⁴² However, while Bosch provided a helpful review of missions history, he also emphasized the importance of ecumenical cooperation in world missions.⁴³ Ecumenical cooperation is important to a degree, but it can downplay the importance of denominational identity. Hunker’s end goal was to send out *Baptist* pastors to lead *Baptist* churches and *Baptist* church planters to plant *Baptist* churches. Further, he sought to train up *Baptist* missionaries who could plant *Baptist* churches among the Chinese diaspora.

If Baptist missionaries do not intentionally invest in Baptist institutions today, they will have a shortage of Baptist partners tomorrow. Hunker believed Taiwan Baptists were best positioned to reach Mainland China with the gospel once China reopened to missionaries. He felt an urgency for the Great Commission in Taipei, Taiwan, Asia, and

⁴⁰ Carl Hunker, “Taiwan Baptist Seminary Faculty,” *Taiwan Journal: A Baptist Mission Review* 6 (July–August 1959): 3–4.

⁴¹ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 109.

⁴² David Jacobus Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011).

⁴³ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 377–522.

among the global Chinese diaspora. He believed the best way to fulfill the Great Commission was to send out well-trained Baptist missionaries who knew how to reach the lost and disciple them through local Baptist churches. Thus, he emphasized cooperative efforts (i.e., the CBC) to fuel evangelism and missions. He believed a cooperative effort, similar to the Southern Baptist model, was the most efficient and effective means for funding missions sending.⁴⁴ Further, he believed that in order to send Baptist workers, he and the other missionaries must invest in cultivating a Baptist identity.⁴⁵ Baptist missionaries today must do likewise.

Hunker Modeled Baptist Distinctives through ASBC

While Hunker was the senior pastor of Amoy Street Baptist Church (ASBC), he instituted his church ministry system, which included forming a deacon body, implementing church membership, and developing a curriculum for a baptism class a candidate must complete before baptism.⁴⁶ His system remains unchanged to this day.

Hunker's system has not only served ASBC well for the past sixty-five years, but it has also benefited many others. As a seminary professor for eleven years and the seminary president for eighteen years, Hunker required every student to observe the system he implemented at ASBC as a model from which to learn.⁴⁷ He did not require students to use this model, but he knew that learning church system principles in a

⁴⁴ The term "Southern Baptist model" refers to the Cooperative Program, which is a cooperative effort among all Southern Baptist churches to fund evangelism, church planting, theological education, and missions.

⁴⁵ Hunker and Hunker, "Letter to Friends."

⁴⁶ Hunker, *Lessons for New Christians*.

⁴⁷ Te-Jen Ke, interview by author, Taipei, Taiwan, March 18, 2020.

classroom was not enough. Using ASBC as his example, he cultivated a Baptist identity by providing a living example from which his students could learn.⁴⁸

Hunker had opportunity to implement his system because he served as senior pastor for a season. Missionaries today should be willing to serve as lead pastors of church plants in the beginning if their sending church and missions agency allow. As long as the missionary is intentional to raise up, transition to, and support local leadership, serving as the pastor in the beginning stages of the church can be a helpful way to model healthy church governance.

Further, missionaries seeking to introduce a new model of church ministry in fields that already have traditional churches should consider planting and pastoring a church for a season. Doing so will build credibility with national believers, and the church can then serve as a model for others. Missionaries tend to forget that they probably cultivated their ministry principles by observing other churches, especially American missionaries who were raised in church-saturated areas. Most national workers do not have a variety of churches from which to learn. Planting one healthy church (i.e., first generation) can serve as an example for others (i.e., second generation and beyond). Hunker's investment in ASBC in the early years served him and others well for the entirety of his career in Taiwan and to this day.

Hunker Trusted Indigenous Leadership

Hunker embraced the notion that a cross-cultural missionary was to be the catalyst that initiated new work, but indigenous leaders were to be empowered and trusted to carry the work further. Each time Hunker left a position, he intentionally transitioned leadership responsibilities to indigenous leaders. For example, in 1954,

⁴⁸ One of the ways Hunker cultivated a Baptist identity in his students through ACBC was by teaching local church autonomy and guiding churches to implement a deacon system through congregational cooperation.

Hunker helped establish the CBC, and he served as vice-chairman for three years while he prepared a national leader to take his place on the committee.⁴⁹ In regard to local church leadership, Hunker transitioned the responsibilities as ASBC's senior pastor to an indigenous leader once he was ready, which required seminary and ordination.⁵⁰ Moreover, Hunker extended his tenure as TBTS president three years longer than he had hoped so he could adequately equip a national leader to serve as the first indigenous seminary president.⁵¹ In each occurrence, Hunker trusted the national leader to lead.

According to Jim Graham, one of Hunker's qualities that separated him from other missionaries was Hunker's ability to trust indigenous leaders, even if they led in a way that differed from Hunker.⁵² Trust is required to pass the baton of leadership to the next generation, and Hunker demonstrated that ability time after time.⁵³ Missionaries today must likewise be intentional to develop and trust indigenous leadership if the work is to move forward because the missionary will one day leave that people and place.

Hunker Measured Success through a Long-Term Lens

Hunker earned his Th.D. in Christian Missions to help him discern God's missionary calling in his life as well as to prepare him for lifelong ministry on the mission field. When he sailed from the United States to China, he expected to be in China for the rest of his life. After relocating to Taiwan, he gave three decades of missionary service to the people there.

⁴⁹ Carl Hunker, "Email to Linda Phillips," April 2, 2004, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

⁵⁰ Chien-Chung Chou, telephone interview by author, March 22, 2020.

⁵¹ See Crawley, "Biographical Sketch"; Faye Pearson, *Taiwan Connections: Fond Memories* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2009), 52.

⁵² Jim Graham, telephone interview by author, February 27, 2020.

⁵³ Graham, interview.

Hunker's longevity is one of the contributing factors to his influence. His ability to train leaders over thirty years helped him to build the trust and credibility needed to influence a generation of pastors and church leaders. Hunker knew that to see his vision for Taiwan fulfilled, it would take decades to cultivate. He was faithful to complete an annual report, but he was careful not to evaluate success or failure in the short-term. He had a long-term vision and exhibited the patience required to fulfill those plans.

Hunker knew that to be effective in an Asian context, the missionary must build deep relationships. By remaining in one place for decades, he was able to build the relationship capital required to garner deep influence. His presence and consistency built deep respect with his disciples.

Hunker had a vision for engaging Mainland China and the Chinese diaspora with the gospel through well-equipped Taiwanese Baptist missionaries, but he did not rush his efforts to see his vision accomplished.⁵⁴ He served as one of the Baptist convention's founders, knowing it would take years for the local workers to fully embrace and own the leadership for the convention.⁵⁵

Hunker also knew the seminary needed his leadership for a season while he prayed and sought to raise up an indigenous leader who could effectively lead the seminary forward. He was willing to give eighteen years to his role as president because he knew the seminary would not last if he named a national president too soon. Hunker evaluated success through a long-term lens, knowing success requires national leadership, and he was patient to develop leaders who could one day take his place and make greater advancements for the kingdom than he ever could. Missionaries today must likewise evaluate their work through a long-term lens.

⁵⁴ Hunker, *Taiwan*, 121.

⁵⁵ Carl Hunker, "Email to Linda Phillips," July 26, 2004, Carl Hunker Collection, TBTSL.

Conclusion

Hunker set an example worth following throughout his forty-year missionary career. He was careful to minister in a way that was biblically faithful and culturally sensitive. His principles have missiological implications for all cross-cultural missionaries who want their church-planting fruit to survive the test of time.

Recommendations for Future Research

This dissertation is the first research conducted on Hunker's influence on Taiwan Baptists. In the course of this research, numerous related questions arose. In this section, I identify research topics worthy of further inquiry.

The first area of inquiry relates to the many missionaries who also served Taiwan Baptists throughout their seventy-year history. Hunker was not alone. One of the contributing factors to Hunker's influence was his ability to work within a team of missionaries. He had the unique opportunity to serve as the seminary president, but many missionaries gave their careers or even their lives for the advancement of the gospel in Taiwan. Many past missionaries are worthy of same depth of research I gave to Hunker. They made significant investments in their own context, and a thorough exploration into their life and ministry would serve the universal church well.

A second area of inquiry relates to the full history of the Taiwan Baptist Convention. This dissertation focused on Hunker's role, but further research relating to the development of the convention and the churches who made up the convention would be helpful. The following are all relevant questions that would help missionaries today understand how to minister in Taiwan: "When was the convention at its height?"; "What influence did Chow Lien-Hwa have on the convention?"; "What role did FMB/IMB missionaries play throughout the life of the convention?"

A third area of inquiry pertains to the impact liberalism, "New Directions," and the Church Planting Movement (CPM) initiative had on Taiwan Baptist churches over the

past forty years.⁵⁶ In the 1960s, missionaries sent future seminary professors to the States to complete doctoral degrees that would allow them to teach at the graduate level.

However, liberalism ran rampant in Southern Baptist seminaries at that time.⁵⁷ A study on the effect that liberalism had on national leaders and missionaries would be helpful to understand the state of the church in Taiwan. Further, a study on how the IMB's "New Directions" and, more recently, the CPM initiative affected the IMB's relationship with traditional churches in Taiwan and throughout Asia would be helpful.

The fourth area of inquiry pertains to the many missionaries displaced during the communism takeover of Mainland China in 1949. Known as "Old China hands," these missionaries were scattered throughout East and Southeast Asia.⁵⁸ The Hunkers went to the Philippines before settling in Taiwan. Other FMB missionaries went to Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and other locations in East and Southeast Asia. Though in different contexts, their missionary strategies were similar to that of the Baptists in Taiwan: reach the lost, establish a seminary and local Baptist convention, buy land to build buildings, and ordain qualified pastors.⁵⁹ The similarities and differences of missionary strategy in the 1950s, as well as the lasting impact of those legacy churches today, need to be researched.

⁵⁶ New Directions was a 1997 FMB initiative to develop a comprehensive strategy to engage every people, tribe, and language with the gospel. The initiative resulted in the reassignment of over 50 percent of missionary personnel for the direct engagement of unreached people groups. See IMB, "IMB Milestones: 175 Years of God Working through the IMB," accessed December 4, 2020, <https://www.imb.org/175/imb-milestones/>. For Church Planting Movement, see David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements* (Midlothian, VA: WIGTake Resources, 2004); Steve Smith and Ying Kai, *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution* (Monument, CO: WIGTake Resources, 2011). Garrison defines Church Planting Movement as a "rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment." See Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, 2.

⁵⁷ David S. Dockery, *Southern Baptist Consensus and Renewal: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Proposal* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2008), 192.

⁵⁸ Don Gardner, email interview by author, March 4, 2020.

⁵⁹ This observation is based on the author's conversations with missionaries serving in Southeast Asia.

The fifth area of inquiry involves Hunker's personal spiritual life. This dissertation asked why he was influential in his ministry in Taiwan. However, an inquiry into his personal theology and spiritual disciplines would encourage cross-cultural missionaries.

Final Personal Reflection

Hunker set a great example for missionaries of all ages and contexts. I have enjoyed learning about Hunker's life and hearing of his influence on my Taiwanese brothers and sisters. In this section, I share three personal reflections based on my research and writing.

First, as a cross-cultural missionary, I wanted to learn from a missionary like Hunker, a missionary whose work has survived the test of time. It was my joy to hear story after story of Hunker's influence on the Taiwan Baptist church. I was impressed with how Hunker's impact is still felt today, although he began his missionary career sixty-five years ago and retired in 1986. His disciples trusted him and allowed him to hold profound influence their lives. By studying the life and ministry of Hunker, I am better prepared to minister on the mission field and teach missiological principles in the classroom; for that, I am deeply grateful.

Second, I want to underscore the important distinction between urgency and haste in the missionary task. Hunker felt the urgency of the Great Commission. He worked tirelessly to share the gospel, plant churches, and develop leaders. But he worked with a long-term view. He demonstrated urgency in the task, but he was not hasty. He and the other missionaries cultivated a culture of evangelism and discipleship in the local church by systematically laying a foundation in Taiwan that has survived sixty-five years. Missionaries may always be tempted to embrace "rapid" methods of evangelism, discipleship, and leadership training. But, my hope is that Hunker's example for laying a

good and sturdy foundation that has survived six decades might influence the current and next generation of missionaries.

Third, I want to share where I believe Hunker's legacy belongs in the long history of Taiwan Baptist missionaries. In his Th.D. dissertation, Hunker said that to William Carey, more than any other, belongs the title "Father of Modern Missions" due to the lasting impact Carey's principles had on missionary societies and the mission field.⁶⁰ While many have made an impact on the life of Taiwan Baptists, most notably Charles Culpepper Sr., I believe Hunker is the most worthy of the title "Father of Taiwan Baptist Missions" due to his longevity and lasting impact on his disciples and the churches.⁶¹ God has used many missionaries to influence the life and history of Taiwan Baptists, but he used Hunker in a unique and special way that separates him from others.

Conclusion

Hunker was an influential leader in the history of Taiwan Baptists primarily due to his genuine care for the people, passion for the lost, understanding of culture, and commitment to indigeneity. His steadfast devotion to the Great Commission impacted a generation of people. Hunker once wrote, "If I had 100 years to give to the Lord, I would give them all to missions."⁶² Hunker died at the age of ninety-nine, three months before his one-hundredth birthday. He did not live to one hundred, but the investment he made in others will last much longer, and a generation of Taiwan Baptists are forever grateful.

⁶⁰ Hunker, "The Influence of William Carey," 210.

⁶¹ Ke, interview. Ke believes Hunker is the most influential missionary in Taiwan Baptist history except in the case of the seminary, which Culpepper Sr. founded.

⁶² Maslin, interview.

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ABSTRACT

THE INFLUENCE OF W. CARL HUNKER ON TAIWAN BAPTISTS

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If cross-cultural missionaries, and the local churches who send them, are to be faithful to the Great Commission, a reemphasis on the importance of long-lasting church-planting fruit must occur. One example of a missionary whose work remains decades later is former Foreign Mission Board (FMB) missionary to Taiwan, W. Carl Hunker. This dissertation examines what made Hunker an influential leader in the life and history of Taiwan Baptists. Hunker served with the FMB for forty years, spending thirty-four of those years in Taiwan. He was a pastor, church planter, convention founder, and seminary president. Sixty-five years after his work in Taiwan began, Hunker's efforts still impact the ministry in that country. This dissertation argues that Hunker was an influential leader in the history of Taiwan Baptists due to his care for people, passion for the lost, understanding of culture, and commitment to indigeneity.

Five primary chapters explore why Hunker was influential in the life and history of Taiwan Baptists. With chapter 1 serving as the introduction, chapter 2 provides a brief life sketch of Hunker's life before, during, and after his time in Taiwan. Chapter 3 explores how Hunker's care for people garnered trust and built influence in Taiwan. Chapter 4 explains how Hunker's passion for evangelism impacted his Chinese disciples in Taiwan. Chapter 5 explores how Hunker's understanding of Chinese culture helped him remove cultural barriers and minister to nationals. Chapter 6 explains how Hunker's commitment to indigeneity equipped him to identify, develop, and empower national

leaders. The concluding chapter draws twelve missiological reflections based on Hunker's ministry principles.

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