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1938-08-15, Letter from Charles Roberts to Paul Rood and E.J. Peterson

Charles Roberts

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[Letter on Hunan Bible Institute letterhead]

August 15, 1938

Written from:
214a Prince Edward Road,
Kowloon, Hongkong.

The Rev. Paul W. Rood, D.D., President,
Mr. E.J. Peterson, Business Manager
The Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Incorporated,
558 South Hope Street,
Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Dear Brethern:

I had not realized that one whole month has passed since I wrote you last. This summer seems to have simply fled! And I am still able to be here in Hongkong as the situation on the Yangtse has slowed up. In my last letter I mentioned the fact that I was ready to return to Changsha at a moments notice. The city has been heavily bombed and the 'push' of the Japanese had started, then the Russian border incident came up and things slowed down. What of the future no one can predict a thing. Enclosed are two newspaper articles that will show you just what kind of a situation Changsha is likely to be in . Whether or not we shall be occupied remains to be seen. In any case more bombings are in store! And in any case it will be unwise to attempt to re-open the school for regular study this Fall. In my last letter I also mentioned the fact that I was one of the speakers at the Bethel (Andrew Gih) Conference. And after that Conference I was invited by the Committee of the Pooi Ling Conference (Keswick of China) to be one of the speakers, and was given the daily hour of 10:45 to 12. Brethern I could sincerely wish you might have been able to attend this Conference. The early morning prayer hour with several hundred praying earnestly for China and revival. The morning Bible study hour at which I spoke on Living Messages from the Old Testament, the average attendance was 1,000. This conference was held in the largest Methodist church in Hongkong. For me it was a unique experience. No 'whoopie' of singing, wisecracking and getting the audience in the mood. But an opening song, an earnest prayer and then for one hour or more with Bibles open we studied the Word. And thru the eight days of conference day after day from the opening of the meeting to the close, often times an 1 ½ hrs., no one got up to move around or go out. And each day there was an overflow meeting in the basement. This particular church is of modern type construction and loud speakers were installed. Mr. Leland Wang who attended said he was sure, and I agree with him, that we could have filled the upper auditorium of the Church of the Open Door had that building been in Hongkong. The other speaker at this Conference was a young Bible teacher of the Wuchow Bible School, a Mr. TL. Now with regard to definite plans for the work this Fall and winter. As stated above with the present uncertainties of hostilities in the Yangtse valley and the frequent bombings of Changsha it is almost impossible for us to consider re-opening the school for regular study. However we expect to use the buildings for definite refugee work, firstly for Christian refugees and others and to take every opportunity to have meetings and Bible classes. September 17 to 24 we plan a Conference at the Institute for our regular Biola Band Evangelists and any other Christian Workers who may wish to

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attend. I am arranging to have Mr. CC, a up and coming young Chinese evangelist who has gained favour with a number of spiritually minded layman in the past few years, and also possibly the aforementioned Mr. TL. You will understand, of course, that with 'war' all around us that such plans may have to be changed or even abandoned at the last minute. But we seek to press forward. For the coming year I have outline a three-fold program for the Institute in China.

- 1, -Continuance of the regular Biola Band work.
- 2, -Re-opening of the Scofield Correspondence Course
- 3, -An Extension Department for Bible-Evangelistic Conferences.

1. Biola Band Work. This work which is the original "Evangelists Band" work in China and originated by Dr. Frank A. Keller many, many years ago will continue to function as in the past—evangelizing in districts where the gospel has not been preached. A capable leader and six men in five separate bands will go forth after September 24, to western Hunan and possibly Kweichow province for a years' work. Much prayer is requested on behalf of these thirty five evangelists as they go forth into districts not now directly disturbed by war conditions. With the mass evacuation and migration of Chinese from 'occupied territory' to west and south China the opportunities for service are overwhelming. There are dangers too, but His Love compells [*sic*] us to carry on and to witness to the end. 2. The Rev. C.K. Cheng (Known often as Scofield Cheng) has returned to the Institute after an absence of two years. While in Hongkong recently, Speaking at a conference, he was taken suddenly ill, but he has recovered considerably and is now at Changsha were he is planning to rehabilitate his Scofield Correspondence Course which God has so singularly blessed to hundreds in China, and to a number of Chinese in America who were not able to study the Word with the help of the English course. When strong enuf [*sic*] Mr.Cheng will also be engaged in Conference work. 3. The Rev. CC a growing Evangelist- Bible teacher has accepted a call to do Extension work for the Institute for one year. It is hoped that Mr. C will also be assisted in this department with one or two other prominent men. It is planned that special Conference work will be undertaken in districts where the regular Biola workers are more permanently located, and in this way to gather for short periods of special Bible study such as will have become interested in the Gospel. This department will also visit large centers upon call from Christian churches. Pray that the Lord will lead our brethren as they start out after the Conference at Changsha in September. Mr. Leland Wang former visitor of Biola in Changsha & Los Angeles is sailing on the President Coolidge from Hongkong on August 25, for America. He is expecting to visit Los Angeles and will doubtless call on you. The object of his visit to America is not very definite but he expects to stay about 9 months. He is escorting his daughter who is entering U.S.C. as a scholarship student. Our son Charles who is on his way to Stony Brook, is also sailing on the same ship. I am returning to Changsha on August 26. But please address correspondence to address above and Grace will forward. We would like to hear about the 'reorganization' of Biola at Los Angeles. So many rumours are filtering thru. Most recent one—Dr. Rood has resigned!! And this that and the other. Do drop us a line on the future plans. With our united and warmest love to you all, Yours awaiting the King,

[Signed]

Charles A. Roberts

[The following is hand written on the top right side of page 1]

If you should use any of this letter for K.B. suggest you get a "ghost writer as I have written this in a terrible hurry in order to catch it mail today Chuck