

Dr Alman CHAN Siu-cheuk

Dr Alman Chan has been working as an educator in Hong Kong for three decades. In 1995, having taught at a mainstream secondary school for ten years, he joined Christian Zheng Sheng Association, and subsequently became the founding principal of Christian Zheng Sheng College. Apart from nurturing youths with drug problems like spring wind and rain nurturing seedlings, he does his best to shelter them from wind and rain: at present he is still knocking on doors to seek help in the hope of moving the campus to Mui Wo. Working in the past two decades to provide education for these marginalised young people, he has received thunderous applause and endured furious condemnation. He was selected as one of the “Ten Young Outstanding Young Persons”, but also came under fierce attack from society. Someone has described his experience as “going up to heaven and down to hell”, but a smiling Dr Chan likened the experience to surfing: sometimes riding atop the wave, sometimes inside the wave; luckily he has managed to keep moving forward.

When Dr Chan received his university education in Canada at the age of 19, he was still a self-centred young man. In Hong Kong his school results were unsatisfactory, and he blamed fate. At school he doubted his teacher’s ability, and questioned why he was not the one who gave assignments to his teacher. At home, he complained that his parents favoured his two elder brothers over him. At his aunt’s home in Canada, he resented having to mow the lawn and keep his cousin company...In a nutshell, the world was unjust to him. Yet within a few years, the cantankerous youngster changed thoroughly into a dedicated educator committed even to serving marginalised youths abandoned by society. It was not only because of his Christian faith, but also because he met two great teachers at Trinity Christian College: mathematics teacher Dr Byle and chemistry teacher Dr Van Dyke. They taught by example, which influenced Dr Alman Chan’s values and direction in life.

To Dr Chan and his classmates, mathematics teacher Dr Byle was a highly intelligent robot. During four and a half years of teaching, he was never late. Playing chess with more than a dozen seasoned players simultaneously and even in handicap games, he still beat them handily. Dr Chan recalled that one day, attending his class, three of four students were absent. So Dr Byle just put the lesson aside and played chess with him. In fact, the teacher took the opportunity to have an open chat with him, during which a statement from Dr Byle changed his future.

“Money is not the most important thing” — That is what he said.

Graduating from a prestigious university, Dr Byle chose to teach at a small college with only 800 students, just in order to have a closer teacher-student relationship. Driving a small car which struggled particularly hard when climbing slopes, he generously invited hungry students home to dine together. Despite being a man of letters, he paid more attention to igniting students’ curiosity and inspiring their learning attitude. He showed Dr Chan what it meant by

“money is not the most important thing” and that teacher-student relationship is more important than money. Under his teacher’s influence, Dr Chan returned to Hong Kong to start his teaching career in 1985. Later on, he accepted Christian Zheng Sheng Association’s offer to teach youths with special needs on only a quarter of his previous salary. Yet a loving heart, an education diploma and a PhD in religious studies were not sufficient for the challenge. It was the enlightenment of Dr Van Dyke, the second great teacher he met at college that enabled him to have faith in himself to overcome hurdle after hurdle ahead.

At his graduation, the chemistry teacher Dr Van Dyke asked Dr Chan what he had learnt in the last four and a half years. “Not much,” Dr Chan said bluntly. “It’s okay. From now on, you can learn anything by yourself,” Dr Van Dyke responded. What the teacher said has become his motto. When teaching in a secondary school, he self-taught himself how to coach a basketball team. As a result, his students won the match. Joining Christian Zheng Sheng Association, he self-taught himself how to educate young drug addicts. As a result, some graduates were accepted by universities while some returned to society and made their contributions.

To Dr Chan, the most valuable things received from the college are the skills of asking questions and a passion for asking questions and learning. As a teacher himself, following Dr Byle’s example, he cares for his students and has become capable of perceiving a multi-dimensional life and reading the life story of every student. When looking back with a new perspective, he has come to understand that his parents who had passed away did love him, their youngest son. He has also become much grateful for the love and care of his aunt during the few years in Canada... That cranky boy has learnt to savour every moment, count every blessing and embrace lifelong learning. He knows that in doing so he will not become dizzy with success, nor be defeated by failure. No matter he is riding atop the wave or inside it, he knows very well that he is soldiering on towards his ultimate goal: to let his life become a blessing to others.

Mr Chairman, for Dr Chan’s dedication to education and contribution to help the marginalised youths return to society, may I present Dr Alman Chan to you for conferment of an honorary fellowship.

Chinese citation delivered by Prof Lisa Leung

陳兆焯博士

陳兆焯博士在香港從事教育工作三十年，十年任教於主流中學，1995年加入基督教正生會。其後，他當上正生書院的創校校長，為正在戒毒的青少年春風化雨，同時也竭力為他們「遮風擋雨」：刻下仍為遷校梅窩一事四出奔走。二十年來，為了讓這些邊緣青少年獲得教育機會，他聽到熱切的掌聲，也聽到沸騰的罵聲；得過「十大傑出青年」獎，也受過社會猛烈的攻擊。有人形容陳博士這段日子可謂上過天堂，下過地獄；他卻笑言自己像滑浪，時而在浪頂，時而在浪裡，猶幸的是大方向還是前進的。

陳博士十九歲到加拿大讀書時，還是個自我中心的青年。在香港唸書成績欠佳，怨懷才不遇；在學校不服老師，反問為甚麼不是他給功課老師做；在家怨父母偏愛兩個哥哥，不愛自己；到加拿大寄居姨母家，又怪姨母要他剪草陪表弟……總之，全世界都虧欠了他。這樣的一個負氣小子，卻在唸大學的數年間徹底改變過來，不單委身教育，更愛及遭人厭棄的邊緣青少年。當中原委除有了基督教信仰外，也因為在三一西部大學唸書的幾年間遇上了兩位賢師，一位是教數學的Byle博士，另一位是化學老師Van Dyke博士。他們的身教，影響和啟發了陳博士的價值觀和日後的人生取向。

當年在陳博士和其他同學眼中，數學老師Byle博士是個聰明絕頂的機械人。教他的四年半期間，從不遲到；和國際象棋高手比賽，一人對十幾個棋手，讓棋之餘還大獲全勝。一次上課，四個同學三個缺席，只餘陳博士一人，於是Byle博士索性不教書，只跟他下棋；然而名為下棋，實為懇談，也是那次老師的一句話影響了陳博士的人生。

「金錢並不是最重要的東西。」——就是這麼的一句話。

眼見唸名牌大學出身的老師心甘情願選擇到一間只得八百名學生的小型大學教書，為的是想跟學生親近一點；開的是上斜坡格外吃力的小汽車，卻慷慨招呼窮學生回家吃飯；滿腹學問，卻更看重啟發學生的求知欲和學習態度。一切都是身教，教曉他「金錢並不是最重要的東西」；也教曉他與學生的關係比金錢更重要，於是八五年返港從事教育工作，之後更自願削減

四分三薪酬，到基督教正生會教導有特殊需要的孩子。然而，要面對這項挑戰，卻不是單靠無限愛心或讀了教育文憑及拿了宗教研究博士學位便能勝任，而是唸大學時遇到的第二位賢師對他的啟蒙，讓他自信有能力靠自學也能克服一個又一個的難關。

大學畢業時，教化學的Van Dyke博士問陳博士上了四年多他的課，學到什麼？陳博士直話直說：「沒學到什麼。」老師回應：「不打緊。從現在開始，你要靠自己學習所有事物。」這句話成為他終身學習的座右銘，也讓他教中學時，成功自學為籃球隊教練，結果學生比賽獲勝；到了基督教正生會，學習教導戒毒青少年的方法，結果不乏成功入讀大學或重投社會、貢獻社會的畢業生。

陳博士說，唸大學最大的收穫是學會發問、愛上發問、愛上學習。現在的他，跟Byle博士一樣關愛學生，學會閱讀每個學生的生命故事，看到「立體」的生命。他也學會轉一個角度去看事情，在回望中，明白到現已離世的父母其實是疼愛他這個小兒子的。對於在加拿大照顧了他多年的姨母更是感激不盡……昔日的負氣少年已學懂活在當下，常常感恩，終身學習，不管身處浪裡浪頂，都能勝不驕敗不餒，朝著心中的大方向進發，讓自己的人生成為別人的祝福。

主席先生，為表揚陳博士對教育的熱誠，對教導邊緣青少年重投社會所作出的貢獻，本人謹恭請 閣下頒授榮譽院士銜予陳兆焯博士。

中文贊辭由梁旭明教授宣讀