

Jathniel Calvin Shao

There is a Chinese saying that money will not last past three generations (富不過三代), but as the grandson of Rev. Wesley K. Shao, I can testify that the blessings of the Lord to those who are faithful to Him will overflow for generations. For those who only know him from his powerful sermons, allow me to share some personal memories of my grandfather, Wesley Shao.

Angkong was one of the first to travel to America to study theology at the Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan. In those days, a transpacific journey did not involve a flight, but over a month's journey by boat and train. Aside from his Bible, the most precious cargo he brought with him was Chinese tea, lovingly packed for him by his wife, Too Siu Pao. Despite the scarcity and lack of appreciation, he would still share his precious tea with his friends and classmates.

My earliest memories of Angkong are happy ones, as both of us enjoyed making jokes with wordplay and puns in Chinese and English. I remember how he always carried a Bible and a small notebook with the names of everyone from family to friends to seminarians he had just met written down so that he could pray for all of us daily. He would wake up early in the morning and get properly dressed to do his morning quiet time with the Lord and some exercise in the garden. After visitations with his flock, he would come home with barbeque chicken, chef salad, and ice cream for his beloved grandchildren. Of all his grandchildren, mostly in America, Australia, Canada, and Japan, I am the most blessed because I was the one by his side here in the Philippines, where Angkong chose to stay for the sake of his mission and ministry.

Since he was a young child on the island of Gulangyu, he had always loved swimming, and that was something we always did together. He would measure the length of each pool we swam in and decide how many laps he would swim. When I was younger, he would regularly swim 20 or more laps in a standard sized pool. Later, in his 70s and 80s, the laps slowly decreased to 16, then 12. Even at the age of 93, he would still swim 5 or 6 assisted laps with us walking beside him.

When the typhoon Ondoy flooded into our house that same year, I tried to carry Angkong out to safety. Although the waters were almost waist-high, he still chose to walk with my assistance from the front of the old UECP sanctuary to safety at my aunt Joyce Co's apartment in the neighboring Benavidez Gardens, a distance of roughly 40 meters. Seeing his strength and fighting spirit reminded me of how heavy his briefcase was when I tried to carry it as a child, a briefcase we would later find after the flood.

Angkong taught us many sayings, like (一日剪頭三日英俊, 三日剪一次英俊永不退) which says that getting your haircut will make you handsome for three days, and getting a haircut every three days will make you handsome forever. As the one who cut his hair and tied his tie for the last few years of his life, this has a special meaning for me. The last day before internment, I noticed that his tie was crooked, so I made sure to fix it one last time before his body went to meet his Lord.

My grandmother passed away almost 24 years ago, on February 29, 1988. Since then, Angkong counted the days they were apart. Even in his 80s, he would still answer with the exact number when asked. On January 4, 2012, 8,709 days later, they were together again. Representatives from almost every Chinese church in the Philippines came to pay respects, from as far north as Laoag and as far south as General Santos, from as close as Grace Gospel Church, the last church where Rev. Wesley Shao regularly spoke, and even from other countries like America, Australia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, and Malaysia. Pastors and choirs from all those churches took part in the necrological services, an example of unity in the body of Christ.

Job 1:21 says that the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. In the life of Wesley Shao, and even in his passing, we can truly say that the Lord has blessed us, and blessed be the name of the Lord.

Ruth Carol Shao

When I think about my grandpa, I remember his quiet gentle spirit. Angkong could command the room with his presence. And even though he did not say it too often, I knew that he loved us in how he cared, served, and provided for us in his special way. It's a blessing to have grown up living with him.

When I was little, Angkong brought me his daily spare change for me to collect and count. I remember countless Christmases of Sunday dresses and Barbie dolls. On evenings, my grandpa surprised us with the best: barbecue chicken from Aristocrat. And during my awkward teenage years, he made sure to bring salad home for me -- even though as many of you know it is taboo to eat raw vegetables in a Chinese diet.

One of my first and fondest memories of Angkong is "playing" piano next to him. Angkong had a routine of playing his favorite hymns on the piano after dinner. I remember climbing up onto the piano bench next to him to add some "sparkle" to his songs. After dinner, we would - as a family - take a walk around the campus. Nothing stopped him from keeping this routine.

I've learned so much from his example -- and the lessons keep coming as I reflect on his life. From keeping a daily routine, having a good balance of work, rest, and play, enjoying the simple things such as a daily siesta and waking up to ice cream and green tea, to more spiritual matters such as his discipline, faithfulness and passion for the Lord, I am proud to be his 3.96. His favorite -- but of course as Angkong would put it, we're all his favorites.

I am thankful for his example of fighting the good fight of faith and that he is now in the arms of our dear Savior where there are ten thousand charms.



Reuelle Charis Shao

My grandfather lived a life with the sole purpose of glorifying God. His life and ministry were wholeheartedly full of the love and the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. So today, we remember and celebrate him, for his love for God, his love for people, and his love for his family. One very vivid example of his devotion to God is how he would always have tea and ice cream at two every afternoon as he read the Bible and prayed in the dining area or in the garden. Because of his example of how to be a follower and lover of Christ, I am proud to declare my salvation in Christ.

Another thing we celebrate is his love for people. I have always been amazed by his ability to recognize the people who visited him and how he gave them a warm welcoming smile. His ministry was about serving people, whether it was visiting them at the hospital, providing prayer when needed, or being a wise spiritual leader to anyone who needed help.

But more than just an icon, a senior pastor, a songwriter, and a lecturer, Rev. Wesley K. Shao was a great man because he was my grandfather. I remember how we used to play games after dinner every night. In my favorite game, we would take turns hiding things around his room. We would even go as far as opening and closing random drawers to confuse the other of where the object was hidden. I remember peeking a lot during the game, and I suspect he knew but would never say that I was cheating. Every night before we went to bed, my grandfather would make sure to come in and ask for his good night kiss. This was one of the many ways he showed his love for me. Another way was how he shared his little joys like walking on the boulevard to watch the sunset or going on a drive to look at the Christmas lights. These were things he enjoyed very much, and by sharing those experiences with me, they have become the things that I enjoy as well.

So today as we remember his legacy and celebrate his life, let us rejoice that he is now with our Father in Heaven. He set his life as an example as stated in 1 Timothy 4:12, and one of his songs, "God wants me to be his sunbeam," says: "in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity."

Cristina A. Co

UECP has lost a great patriarch and a spiritual leader of all time. He will always be remembered as a true shepherd who "bled for Christ's church." Never political, but ever focused in his calling as a shepherd to God's flock. Like Jesus, he was simple and humble. His message on Jonah prompted me to step out into the ministry. His course on Pastoral Studies was so rich I had to stop by the [BSOP] Library after each class to meditate and reflect on the materials. He has taught me well, and I will never forget the many precious life lessons I have learned from him. Rev. Wesley Shao is a dear teacher, pastor, and model to us. Together with all his students, we will miss him dearly.

BSOP family rendered a song on January 9, 2012 during the Funeral Service at the Ascencion Columbarium.



BSOP family rendered a song of comfort during the Funeral Service on January 10, 2012 at the United Evangelical Church of the Philippines.



Dr. Joseph Shao remembering his father and thanking all the guests who shared their sorrow.



Some of BSOP's faculty and staff visited Rev. Wesley Shao around 2010.

