

Article for English Corner Discussion

1. Article 1-1: How to Progress toward a Harmonious Society -1 (和谐社会)

Since China introduced its reform (改革) and opening-up (开放) policies in 1978, we have seen tremendous (非常大的) changes in both the economic system and social structure. However, over such a vast territory with such a large population; along with all the great achievements (成就) made in such a short period of time came problems and headaches. These include an ever widening gap between the rich and poor, corruptions, absence of an effective social welfare (社会福利) system, an imbalance between urban and rural development, widespread unemployment (失业), an aging population, and environmental pollutions (环境污染). Economic achievements and market economy are by no means remedies for everything. It is equally important for China to seek a way to progress toward a harmonious society. President Hu Jintao has instructed government officials to place “progress toward a harmonious society” as top priority on their agenda. “Such a harmonious society should feature democracy (民主), the rule of law (法治), equality (平等), and justice for all, enabling all people to share in the social wealth and forging an ever closer relationship between the people and the government. These things will result in a lasting peaceful society” said President Hu.

A harmonious society means harmony in social relations, human relations, social atmosphere, and social causes. It is a concept applicable to economy, political and social reform, which are all inter-dependent to one another. Rapid economic development and political reform alone can not build a harmonious society, because human beings are the basic building blocks and the foundation of a society. The moral ethics (伦理道德) and character (品德) of each human being are essential and vital to the successful development of a harmonious society. Therefore, the character building (品德建造) is foremost important and essential in such an endeavor. Without a solid social foundation of personnel ethics, no matter how fast the economic development is advanced; no matter how good a political system

reform is planned; the society is bound to collapse, being head-heavy with a soft social ethic foundation.

Then how do we go about character building? It is a historical fact that Biblical Truth can regenerate (改过自新) a person and reform (改善) a society. Take the Nation of America for example, in 200 years it has become the most advanced Country in the world, one of the reasons being that most of the founding fathers and pioneers were Bible-reading and God-fearing (敬畏神) people. Some of most the useful Bible verses on character building and ethics enhancements are listed below for your reference:

1. Do to others what you would have others do to you. (Matthew 7:12)
2. It is more blessed to give than receive. (Acts 20:35)
3. For the love of money is the root of all evil. (1Timothy 6:10)
4. For we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. (1 Timothy 6:7 - 8)
5. What good would it be for a man to gain the world at the cost of his own life? (Luke 9:25)
6. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; (I Corinthians 13:4 -5)
7. But Jesus said, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, “ (Matthew 5:44)
8. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)
9. “Do not ask what the country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your Country.” by John F. Kennedy in his presidential inauguration address in 1962.
10. From Chinese classic text: “礼义廉耻, 国之四维, 四维不张, 国乃灭亡”

2. Discussions:

1. List all the economical achievements in China since 1978.
2. What are the most serious problems facing our Chinese government?
3. Do you agree with the solution this article proposed?