

# Listen to the Wailing of the Soul

by Zhiming Yuan

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*Zhiming Yuan's sermon calls for a return to faith and moral integrity in the face of modern China's spiritual crisis driven by materialism and greed.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 1:18, Malachi 4:1, Matthew 16:26, John 8:12, James 1:15

**Topics:** "Moral Decline", "Spiritual Repentance"

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## Description

Zhiming Yuan delivers a powerful sermon addressing the spiritual struggles and moral decline in China, comparing past generations who sought truth and God's love to the current generation lost in materialism and selfish desires. He warns against the dangers of pursuing wealth and prosperity at the expense of one's soul, emphasizing the importance of repentance, seeking God, and nurturing a conscience. Yuan highlights the decline of moral values in both China and the Western world, urging the audience to learn from history and turn back to God before it's too late.

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## Transcript

Towards the end of the seventies, after the trauma of the Cultural Revolution, "China Youth" published an article titled "Why Does Life's Path Get Narrower And Narrower?" by Pan Shaio.

Early in the nineties, in the heat of reform, "China Youth" published another article by Wu Tao, "We Have Lost Our Keys!"

Decades have gone by; Pan Shaio has entered his middle age years, and his sigh has been long gone with the wind. But the young Wu Taos, the next generation, -- why are they still sighing? And it is not a mere sigh; it is the crying of the soul!

Oh, privileged princes of this vast land, are you selling your soul to the world by indulging yourself in disco and foreign luxury goods? Material things and your faulty reasoning have blinded your soul. With your masks on, you have set out to seek your own space.

You are longing for a "world that is filled with love" and yet confronted with the cruel reality that "others are hell". Are you giving up yourself? Yes, you are exiling yourselves back to the glacial period. Oh, warm and tender souls, can you withstand the bitter cold? You are lost, indeed. Love has become a burden, and integrity has become a laughing stalk. Naked exchanges have shredded to piece any genuine feelings. Flaming lust has burned up all sense of modesty. In moments of solitude, you weep for the life that you

yearn for.

The ugly and greedy pursuit of the world has swallowed up the noble and moral character of our culture. Who worries about you and who is concerned? You say, "The sun still rises and the moon still goes down. Come! Let's cheer!" Yet it is clear that it is you who have sounded the alarm, here is "a fire that can bake dry the human soul!". Behold, a raging fire that dries up the soul is spreading across this ancient beloved land.

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Despite heavy indoctrination, The Pan Shaios of the past caught glimpses of the hidden wickedness of the human heart. Having struggled through pain and despair, they discover THE JOY LIKE HAVING DISCOVERED THE NEW WORLD, that all the indoctrination and teachings of the communists were unable to change, but only disguise, the selfish nature of man.

The dreams they held since childhood were utterly shattered.

Unfortunately they were one step too short. Their awakened generation did not go straight to the Truth where they could learn that our selfish nature sprang from original sin, a defect. Instead, they exalted high the human selfish nature as the banner for the new era. Hence, under the grand design of Deng Shiao Ping, the "human selfishness" boldly entered the stage of twentieth century China. It played the main character of a historical play of "develop, make money, and enjoy!"

I know that without stimulating the selfish nature of man, it is impossible for China to modernize. But I also know, "After desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death." (from the Bible)

Engles may have said it right, "Evil is the true driving force behind historical developments". The Chinese proverb also said it well, "Evil begets evil." As expected, China's economy is booming, but crime is also soaring and evil is having its hey day. So, the soul is crying and reason is confused, "Is this the unavoidable fallout on the way to modernization?"

We must ask both ourselves and China: Does man's prosperity and economic sufficiency have to come at the cost of starving and impoverished souls? Is it worth it? "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Jesus' words in Matt 16:26)

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"Let's not worry about our souls; let's develop first" the devil tempted. Remember the first pilgrims who came to the new continent of America on the "Mayflower"? Toiling through trouble waters, bitter cold and famine, more than half of them died. To survive was their only goal. After they conquered that first bitter winter, harvested their first crop and survived, they knelt down in the wilderness and gave their thanks to God, and this was the first Thanksgiving in America.

My beloved China, you are seeking to make a New World, but do you have such genuine faith to sustain your soul?

As development became the top priority, the pilgrims first built churches. Indeed, they were pursuing freedom and prosperity, and there was selfishness and competition, but they also recognized the love of

God. With grateful hearts, they learned to respect others while defending themselves. They obtained wealth from the earth but also received their conscience from heaven, so that they knew how to properly use their wealth. There was sin among them, but they also had God.

My beloved China, you are sinful also, but you do not have God. Without repentance, how are you going to tame your wild desires? With what are you going to purify your defiled conscience? Having wealth, one needs culture; having culture, one needs conscience and only then can it be called civilized. Seek after conscience and wait upon God, and your pursuit will not be in vain.

My beloved China, you are chasing after the footsteps of the West, but do you know that since the sixties, the United States has strayed from God? Several rulings of the Supreme Court concerning the public schools have determined the course of the whole country. In 1962, prayers were banned from public schools and in the next year, Bible reading was also forbidden. In 1970, Congress forbade the reading of the recorded prayers from the Congressional recordings. In 1976, the word "God" was deleted from all government documents. In 1979, kindergartens were forbidden to tell the Christmas story to their students. When you are imitating the present western world, you are not copying its core and noble origin, but its outward appearance and corruption.

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Do you recall when chairman Mao led the whole country into political reform during the Cultural Revolution, how everybody was so excited that they released the devil of "hate" forth from their hearts? In the end, it bankrupted China's economy. Today is the time for reform again. Deng Shiao Ping led the whole nation into economic reform. People were so zealous to satisfy their desires, they set free the devil of "greed" from their hearts. What will be the outcome? History is revealing it, and one day it will make its official pronouncement through blood and fire -- China's soul is at the brink of bankruptcy

Back then, among the generation who immersed themselves in political zeal and fervor, who would have detected the coming danger and crisis? With tears in their eyes, they shouted: Long live Chairman Mao! Today, among those who indulged themselves in dreams of "making it rich", who are those that can detect the coming danger and crisis? Sincerely they say, "Greetings, dear Shiao Ping!" In the past, even if there were a few who spotted the danger, who would listen to them? Who was able to blunt the workings of the "hate" devil?

Today history is repeating itself; but who will capture the "greed" devil and put it in a flask? It is likely that today we have sown an even greater disaster! If a ruined economy could be restored in ten years, can we restore the bankrupt soul of its people in ten years? If the nation fell into poverty because of the ruined economy, would it then not follow that 1.2 billion people will go down as wild animals because of the bankruptcy of their souls?

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But I am not pessimistic, for I know God is love, and God is all powerful. I know for sure the short step that was not taken by the Pan Shiao's generation that could lead them to Truth, will be taken by the Wu Tao's generation. I am convinced that the door that could not be open by reason will be opened at the call of the souls. It is time. Have you heard? The Wu Taos are aware that they have lost their keys. Furthermore they are saying, "The terrible thing is not that we have lost our keys, but it is our indifference toward getting them back."

"Sun, did you see my keys? May your light shine on it !"

The Sun is in heaven, the Sun is on earth. HE is the sunshine of our hearts bringing forth the light of life.

Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. . . . The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. Put your trust in the Light while you have it, so that you may become Sons of Light." Listen to me, you souls who are struggling in the flames in China. The Light has heard your cry. He will dry your tears and heal your wounds with His gentle hands.

Behold! After the fire of lust passes, the holy consuming fire will flare! From the Telemud River to the Wang Po River, from the Hai-Lung River to the Pearl River, the waters are drying up from the heat. Tears are filling the eyes. Hearts are repenting and those who seek shall find. The DESOLATOR IS BEING DESTROYED. THE RESISTANT IS CEASED. Through the baptism of blood and fire, our ancient and beloved China will revive.

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Mr. Yuan, Zhiming came from Beijing. He is the co-author of "River Elegy" and is now an editor and research staff of Overseas Campus Magazine.

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