

# Avoiding Nightmares and Achieving Dreams through Partnership

*Churches from Outside China Ministering in China*

Solomon Seylani

**The First Nightmare:** My wife and I received an unusual call that day asking if we could help translate for a couple of Australians who were supporting a Chinese house church evangelist who was now having some problems. When we arrived we found not just a problem, but a huge mess. Apparently, the Australian couple, with little experience in China and limited language ability, had started their own tiny agency with the help of their home church. They were committed to identifying and financially empowering local individuals believing they were the key to the evangelization of the Chinese.

Unfortunately, when this couple picked the evangelist, they were not aware that he was already receiving a salary from a local house church. Consequently, when they started supporting him financially they effectively doubled his income. Then, when they gave him a motorcycle they unknowingly granted him celebrity status because of his newly gained wealth. In the past, when they had come to check up on him (unfortunately, they only did this every four

months) he had wowed them with seemingly glowing reports of the ministry that was being accomplished, but this time was different. They could not find him at home and, when they finally tracked down his wife, she told them how he had left her and was having an affair with a young woman in one of his discipleship groups. If somehow that was not shocking enough, her next statement totally devastated them. "You've ruined our marriage with your money and the motorcycle you gave him. As soon as you take it all away, I'm sure that girl will drop him in a second and he'll come back to me." Unfortunately, when confronted that day the evangelist's heart

**The quickest way** for a church to ensure that it gets involved in strategic, effective ministry **is by choosing a good partner.**

China Partner



was hardened by sin and he refused to give up his girlfriend. Deeply disturbed and with their heads still spinning, the Australian couple informed him that they were stopping his support (they were unwilling to take back his motorcycle). We took them to the bus station, and they dejectedly boarded their bus—left speechless by the harsh realities and complexities of ministry inside China.

**A Second Nightmare:** Our house church friend sounded so deeply confused and discouraged that we decided to visit him. When we arrived, he described the bind he was in. The morale of the young evangelists under him was at an all-time low, and they were threatening to resign. He went on to describe his dilemma.

A year prior, he had met some leaders from a church outside of China that had offered to come several times a year to do Bible training workshops for his evangelists. The church leaders also said they would pay the annual rent for an apartment that would be used for the training. At the time, our house church leader friend was thrilled because this same apartment could be used to house several young evangelists, for their own leadership training seminars and for storage of Bibles and other Christian materials. To his dismay, when the church leaders came, each time their training was way too advanced for many of his simple evangelists, most of whom had never finished high school. The exegesis was so in-depth that some mornings they only got through four verses! It had now gotten to the point where the evangelists were refusing to come to the next five-day training session. Our friend had responded, "But if no one comes, they won't keep paying for the apartment!" In the end, he

was able to strong-arm most of his workers into coming to the training, but in the months following that training a number of them transferred to another house church network while others left the ministry altogether to return to secular jobs.

These are a couple of tragic, but true stories that illustrate the harm that concerned, very well intentioned but inexperienced churches can do when becoming involved in China. These stories illustrate the first rule for any church wanting to be involved in ministry in China.

language of that people group.

The concept of Strategy Coordinator has now become well established in world missions and a number of the largest agencies have already trained and placed personnel in this role in China. A great starting place for churches interested in China ministry is to contact some of these agencies and determine which one has values, strategies and ministry locations that best mesh with their own church. A church can then find out among what people groups and cities

## Working with an SC...helps ensure that churches outside China are meeting real needs that contribute toward seeing indigenous churches established among a people group or city in China.

**Principle #1: Carefully select a wise, experienced partner.** Both of the above nightmares would likely have been avoided if the churches had followed this principle. Almost everyone agrees on the benefits of partnership, but the catch for most churches is how to find a wise, experienced partner. Fortunately, with the development in recent years of the role of Strategy Coordinator (SC), this task has become significantly easier. An SC basically researches the spiritual and physical needs as well as the status of a people group or city, then develops, implements and coordinates effective, comprehensive strategies to see that group reached. Their work also includes mobilizing workers and prayer support from around the world and coordinating the development of resources like the Jesus film and other media in the native

that agency has active SCs, as well as the needs in those areas that the church is best suited to help with.

Working with an SC is a very wise strategy. It helps ensure that churches outside China are meeting real needs that contribute toward seeing indigenous churches established among a people group or city in China. A SC will normally link the church with national or expatriate workers in a specific area. Getting linked to these longer-term workers helps ensure that any people that come to Christ through short-term teams will be followed up and incorporated into a new or existing church. Also, if a church wants to be involved in training house church leaders, a SC normally will have made these contacts and have developed enough relationship with them to know what their real needs are. This helps

Brent Fulton, Editor   Julia Grosser, Managing Editor   Dona Diehl, Layout and Design



Copyright © 2004 by ChinaSource. ChinaSource is published quarterly by ChinaSource, which was founded as a cooperative effort of Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Agencies, the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association, World Evangelical Alliance, and the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, and merged with the Institute of Chinese Studies in 2000. Its purpose is to provide up-to-date and accurate analysis of the issues and opportunities facing Christians involved in China service and to provide a forum for exchanging viewpoints and discussing strategies. The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of ChinaSource or its cooperating agencies.

ChinaSource may be requested from ChinaSource, P.O. Box 4343, Fullerton, CA 92834 (info@chsource.org or 714-449-0611). Subscription rates: USA: \$29/yr., \$54/2 yrs., \$79/3 yrs.; International: \$39/yr., \$74/2 yrs. ChinaSource reserves the right to transition the international version to an electronic format to improve service and offset postage rate increases. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted without prior written permission of the publisher.



churches avoid the nightmare scenario above where the training the churches were giving did not match the needs of the local leaders. In addition, SCs or particular field workers will, in most cases, have some experience in knowing how to handle the ever sensitive and potentially harmful issue of providing money to local leaders. They can guide a church in making wise decisions in this area. As the saying goes, "All of us are smarter than one of us," and the quickest way for a church to ensure that it gets involved in strategic, effective ministry is by choosing a good partner.

**Principle #2: Partner in projects that will see churches started.**

This principle in no way minimizes the validity or importance of social projects involving building schools or orphanages, providing water, or agricultural, animal husbandry or economic development projects that more and more churches and agencies are becoming involved in. Many of these types of projects have had a very positive overall benefit for the name of Christ in China. Nonetheless, many could have had a significantly deeper and more long-lasting impact if, from the beginning, they had been linked to some kind of church planting effort. Often the key to making this kind of linkage can again be found in going back to Principle 1: Find a wise, experienced partner. An SC or experienced partner will know the needs of their targeted people group or area. They will especially know of under-evangelized or physically needy areas where social projects can provide access to those areas and link a church with other long-term expatriates or nationals interested or involved in seeing churches started in those areas.

**Dream Come True #1:** In our part of China, an SC periodically was able to involve churches from outside China in mobile dental clinics. These clinics met a real need and consequently were warmly welcomed by the Chinese Public Health Bureau and the needy communities. The outside teams always had opportunities to share with local people and government officials that traveled with them. It illustrates again the tremendous benefit of working with someone who has the same vision as you, the contacts and savvy to put together these types of synergistic projects.



**An SC or experienced partner will know the needs of their targeted people group or area.**

**Dream Come True #2:** In the beginning, our goal for short-term evangelism teams was to see them win a number of people to the Lord. Over time, we came to see that this goal was inadequate and too small, so we started having these teams come with the goal of seeing one or more house churches established before they left. Initially, this was a very intimidating goal for many but, as teams embraced it, they were thrilled to see that they actually were able to see house churches started before they left!

This goal change significantly impacted the way we trained the teams and the way they ministered. We began giving the teams training in how to start easily reproducible house churches. Because "what people learn first they learn best," we had our teams give great attention to what they modeled the first time they gathered the new believers together as a house church. We trained them not to model anything that a relatively new believer would not be able to quickly learn to do. Short-term team members avoided preaching and instead modeled participative biblical lessons where a facilitator merely asked a number of questions. The participants then worked together to find the meaning of the biblical text and applied it to their lives.

Great emphasis was also placed on new believers learning and sharing their

testimonies as well as teaching at least two or more people what they had learned from the Bible each time they met. Because the teams kept things simple, the new believers were willing and able to take ownership of and begin leading the meetings after only a few times. You can imagine how rewarding it was for the short-term teams to get on the plane knowing that God had used them to plant an indigenous, house church led by Chinese believers! Of course these groups were still fragile, and the leaders had many questions, but because an SC had linked the short-term team to an area where there were other expatriates and nationals in place to do follow-up, these groups were able to continue to mature and reproduce.

More than 200 years ago, William Carey exhorted Christians to "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." This is an exhortation we Christians today would do well to heed. Since churches are the backbone of the Christian faith, we all need to expect that God's favor and blessing will be with us as we boldly attempt to plant churches by partnering with experienced workers on the field.

***Solomon Seylani**, his wife and children have been doing pioneer church planting among an unreached people group in China for six years. 13*



# Broaden Your Purposes!

## Short-term China Trips

Gary Russell

**W**hat was the shortest cross-cultural mission trip ever, and who was the first person to return one-way by air?

Philip when dealing with the Ethiopian eunuch!

- Team size: one
- Time at destination: a few hours
- Target people impacted: one
- Follow-up: none

The trip was, we may say, poorly designed—certainly not a model paradigm. Oh yes, there was one other component—the trip sponsor and planner was God.

Philip is not the only example of a cross-cultural mission trip in scripture. We might call his a “VIP” trip: a select leader impacting a select leader(s) for leveraged impact. However, many other cross-cultural trips come to mind (see box).

As we sponsor short-term trips, we have witnessed all of the examples listed applied in China with an interesting mix of results. One retired minister went to China despite his doctor’s protests. He had already had five heart by-pass surgeries. However, he was mature enough to recognize God’s voice—and not afraid to die. Our organization took him—with insurance. Two weeks in China changed, not ended, his life. When he returned home, he decided God was keeping him alive just for China. His subsequent efforts resulted in an entire large denomination, previously uninvolved in China, being significantly mobilized for China ministry. He has returned with us on eight more trips, most recently with a heart transplant.

Numbers of our former trip members are now living in China long-term—studying Chinese, teaching English and heading mercy services among other activities. Others are studying in preparation for doing so. Still others are reaching students from the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) at US universities; one indi-

vidual has even started a new organization for that purpose. Many support various China ministries financially. Most pray. All have brought Bibles or materials requested by Chinese Christians. All have discreetly shared their testimonies one-on-one as relational opportunities have arisen, and scores of Chinese have come to Christ—from PhD’s to peasants. One group adopted the Miao, another the Musuo, another the Tibetans and another North Korean refugees. Several have adopted the obvious—Chinese orphans—which guarantees lifelong China interest. Others, who back home had been seeing counselors, were so profoundly affected that their counselors discontinued any appointments upon their return! As with the scriptural patterns, there are a plethora of purposes.

Most importantly, all these activities and purposes are in response to specific requests as well as in coordination with both local Chinese believers and long-term expatriates. Furthermore, all the short-term purposes are consciously linked to long-term ones: each trip is a joint-venture with leadership shared by multiple organizations including placement agencies. For example, a young widowed teacher went on a trip in July and by that November was living in China under a sending agency which co-led her trip.

From orientation to debriefing, multiple options for ongoing involvement and contacts to pursue involvement are presented to and experienced by short term trip team members. Three groups are in-

tentionally targeted for impact: Chinese, team members themselves and those who are part of a team member’s circle of influence back home.

The philosophy behind this strategy comes from an unusual background. While living in China, I served for two and a half years as the on-site middle man for an average of two trip groups per

Graham Cousens



**China is a big, big, place.** Hundreds of people groups have no known Christians. Hundreds of millions of Chinese have never heard of Christ.

week from a dozen different ministries. Since then, I have led literally dozens of trips to China for many different agencies and churches. The paramount conclusion those experiences brought me to can be stated very simply: broaden your purposes! Why should a team deliver Bibles and then spend their remaining two weeks in China writing postcards from their hotel rooms? Why not visit an English corner? Why should another team teach English but never appropriately share their faith? Why not visit an unreached minority? Why not intercede at strategic spiritual strong-

holds, like temples? Why not have dinner with a mature Chinese believer? Why not arrange a dinner with PRC students at a nearby university once back at home?

Right now, you may be thinking of one or both of the following objections to these suggestions. First, the risk is too great. A secondary purpose might jeopardize the main purpose of the trip, or possibly jeopardize the Chinese. It might also jeopardize long-term workers. Really? How do you know? Do you really know, or are your objections just rationalized timidity? Try this: ask local Chinese believers—not just foreigners—what is or is not risky, and what is or is not worth some risk. Their answers may surprise you. I have found that the most important issues are to stay low-profile while being one hundred percent non-political, loving and doing only good for China.

Second, you may think that these other activities are not the organization's purpose. However, perhaps they are God's purposes—at least for some members of the team. Maybe one of those Bible couriers is called to be an English teacher or a nurse in China. Maybe one of those giddy teen-agers could be the next Hudson Taylor or open a counseling center for suicidal Chinese women. Maybe that doctor is called to reach PRC graduate students at the university near his office. So, what if that is not what our organization does? Why withhold that option from at least being presented? Underlying is an even deeper question: Is our calling as narrow as we think? Are we afraid of a more complicated approach when the familiar is easier?

China is a big, big place. Hundreds of people groups have no known Christians. Hundreds of millions of Chinese have never heard of Christ. China's churches are struggling to pastor their tens of millions of converts and impact society. The entire society is at a historic crossroads seeking for a new national belief system. This is no time for narrow, one hundred percent risk-free territorialism. Multiple viable approaches are available, and all are under-resourced. Maybe we are overdue to put Christ's kingdom first and our pet niches second.

Why not broaden the purposes of our trips? Why not collaborate with others for those purposes? Why not maximize the options of team members for long-term

## Examples of Cross-cultural Mission Trips in Scripture:

- ▶▶ **Jonah** went to Nineveh, an unreached people-group focus; he also went to Tarshish, a dysfunctional escape.\*
- ▶▶ **Paul** made several journeys, the purposes being church planting and follow-up
- ▶▶ **Titus** went to Jerusalem, a delivery man for financial support
- ▶▶ **The Queen of Sheba** traveled to meet Solomon, a desire for cultural exchange.
- ▶▶ **The disciples** that Christ sent out in Luke, chapters 9 and 10, an experience of apprenticeship and random evangelism
- ▶▶ **Abraham's servant**, in Genesis 24, went back to the country of his relative Nahor, a focused task of finding a wife for his son Isaac\*
- ▶▶ **Joshua and Caleb** went into Canaan, their purpose being exposure to the land and research
- ▶▶ **Joseph's brothers** went down to Egypt during a time of famine, under duress and as refugees
- ▶▶ **David** sent out Joab's army, a goal of empire-expanding domination\*
- ▶▶ **Solomon** sent craftsmen to Lebanon for cedar trees, a resource procurement for the home office
- ▶▶ **Paul** was sent to Rome by the authorities
- ▶▶ **David** fled to Philistia to escape Saul, a combination of persecution and creative access.

**Even from this incomplete survey, we see there is obviously a wide array of potential purposes for short-term trips!**

China service? For God's Great Commission to be fulfilled in China, it will take significant collaboration between national believers and internationals, allowing iron to sharpen iron.

The scale of the resources—prayer, human, informational and financial—needs to be proportional to the scale of the task and, at present, it is far from that. Thousands more need to catch China ministry fever! Fortunately, the mixture of God and China seems a singularly intoxicating concoction, often resulting in chronic addic-

tion. The key is administering that first dose. Inject as many qualified candidates as possible and make that first dose count!

*Gary Russell is the international director of China Harvest, now based in Wichita, KS., which mobilizes and networks in many dimensions of China ministry. He has been in full-time China work for 14 years. 13*

*\*Note: These are not recommended precedents although I have witnessed some individuals with parallel intentions.*

# For Thy Kinsmen's Sake: *Diaspora Chinese Serving in China*

Yi Du Kam

**D**iaspora Chinese and China

Since the beginning of Chinese migration overseas, there has been much interest from the Diaspora Chinese<sup>1</sup> community in its motherland. In the history of modern China, Diaspora Chinese have played a very important role. They contributed significantly towards the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty and the founding of the new Republic—so much so that Dr. Sun Yat-Sen labeled them “the mother of the revolution.” Dr. Tsien Hsue-shen, the “father of China’s aerospace program” and “king of rockets,” returned to China from the US in 1955 in the height of McCarthyism after he cofounded NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

More recently, significant investments have been made in China by the Diaspora Chinese community. The greater Shanghai area is now home to over 300,000 Taiwanese businessmen and their families. Close by, Singapore investors joined the Suzhou municipal government to establish a Suzhou Industrial Park in 1994. Hong Kong has over 60,000 companies operating in the Pearl River Delta, employing an estimated 11 million people.

Among the Christian community of the Diaspora Chinese, there has also been significant interest towards ministry in China. A Christian book fair was openly organized in Guangzhou and sponsored by all the major Christian publishers in Hong Kong. Christian radio programs to China are almost exclusively produced by Diaspora Chinese from all over the world, including Southeast Asia and North America. The Diaspora Chinese community in Hong Kong, the US, Canada and the UK produce most of the Christian literature for China ministry, both evangelistic and discipleship.<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that fifty percent of the churches in Hong Kong have had some form of ministry in China since sovereignty was



Graham Cousens

**While there are still subtle cultural differences between China and the culture of the Diaspora Chinese,** the latter can, by and large, function with little adjustment and cultural shock.

returned to China in 1997.

This article will examine the various models of China ministry that Diaspora Chinese are involved in. There will also be comparison and contrast with the rest of the China ministry community, mostly Westerners with some second and third generation foreign-born Chinese.<sup>3</sup> Possible areas of cooperation will be discussed.

## Western and Diaspora Chinese Ministry Models

In general, Westerners are more involved in teaching, professional services and business. They tend to concentrate more on the major cities in the coastal area. The International Fellowship in Bei-

jing gathers over 1,000 foreign expatriates for its Sunday worship while several hundred meet in Shanghai. Much smaller groups (typically less than 20 people) are teaching in most of the major universities in the interior of China in cities with populations in the millions. By and large, most of these expatriates have to learn Chinese after arrival in China. While English teaching in universities remains the most popular avenue for service, teachers in other subjects and at other levels of schooling are also welcomed by China. Professional services cover not just the medical field but also other areas of community development and business. Since the first reentry of Westerners into China



in 1979, there has been evidence of much fruit from their service.

Diaspora Chinese, however, are involved in China based on a very different set of contextual factors, including connections, skills and gift mix. First of all, most Diaspora Chinese have a kinship network with their ancestral village or province. Thus, real estate tycoon Li Ka-Shing contributed over US \$250 million to the university in his native district of Shantou. Christians in Hong Kong concentrate most of their China ministries in Guangdong Province, their ancestral province.

Secondly, Diaspora Chinese speak Chinese as their mother tongue. They are not a visibly distinguishable group in China. This makes direct ministry among house churches viable. House church leadership training programs receive much more input from Diaspora Chinese Christian workers than from their Western counterparts.

Thirdly, as Hong Kong has become part of China, China involvement for the Christians in Hong Kong is becoming a natural outgrowth of their social responsibility. Certainly, the very vocal stand of Catholic Bishop Joseph Zen towards China has added much fuel. Evangelical churches in Hong Kong are advocating China ministry as “walking on two legs”—Christian witness and social involvement.” Many are in church with full disclosure of their church name and Christian identity. There are also advan-



**Among the Christian community of the Diaspora Chinese**, there has also been significant interest towards ministry in China.

tages of living thirty minutes from China. Short term ministry to China from Hong Kong now means leaving on Friday and returning by Sunday. Ministry can occur almost anywhere within an eight-hour one-way commute. Churches in Hong Kong can afford to send teams to China every other weekend—the ministry scope is almost equivalent to having a full time presence in China.

There is also a more formal exchange between Diaspora Chinese churches and the Three Self churches. Exchanges have taken place on the seminary level in Hong Kong, Southeast Asia and other parts of the world. In addition, exchanges

between Three Self churches and Diaspora Chinese pastors are growing. Such exchanges involve not only main-line denominational churches (as is the case in the exchange with most Western countries), but also evangelical churches. Among the estimated 600 Hong Kong churches involved in China, many choose to work directly with a local Three Self church providing training and ministry resources. This is in sharp contrast to the situation just before 1997 when churches in Hong Kong heatedly debated how to relate to the Three Self churches.

On another front, Diaspora Chinese seminaries are offering training opportunities to Christian leaders from China who come from house churches as well as Three Self churches. Some of these seminaries are taking applicants with formal student visas while others are taking students with just a tourist or visitor's visa. Many such schools are doing all they can to help their students, waiving school fees and offering special scholarships.

Diaspora Chinese Christian businessmen are using business platforms for service in China. They set up factories, light manufacturing companies and consulting firms. Some of these businesses provide employment for the local believers—as well as opportunities for in-depth training and study. Others are set up to help house churches get a footing in cities with mass migration induced by rapid urbanization.

Gaylan Yeung



**Diaspora Chinese speak Chinese as their mother tongue.** They are not a visibly distinguishable group in China.

Continued on page 9

# KEYS TO EFFECTIVE SERVICE IN CHINA

Ray Sharpe

## 1 Know Your Field of Service

—*Learn from China's History.*

Study secular history to understand China's culture, people and the Chinese mind. Study the history of Christianity, evangelism and church development in China in order to understand current ministry needs and opportunities. The richness and complexity of Chinese culture is worthy of life-long study. Find an aspect of the culture that interests you (art, calligraphy, cooking, etc.) and make it an area for continuous study. Your knowledge and interest in this area will enable you to gain respect and provide openings for conversation with Chinese friends.

—*Learn from China's Church.* God has done a great work in China. Even Mao Zedong, who sought to wipe out all religion from China, was a "Cyrus" who unwittingly paved the way for the spread of the gospel (for example, by uniting China

with a common dialect). The miracle of the 2nd millennium is 100-fold growth of the church in one generation, from less than one million Christians before 1949 to 60 or more million today. China's church, arguably the world's fastest growing Christian movement, is unique in the current world and in history.

Like the early church under the Roman Empire, the church in China has thrived under persecution. In China's church we see recovered New Testament patterns such as the *tuandui*, an apostolic, team ministry model. The church went from the "cathedralism" of the missionary era, when church life centered around the church building, to a dependence on the Holy Spirit and recognition of the value of lay ministry and Christian fellowship. In the absence of formal leadership and teaching opportunities, this church has learned the value of God's Word. The miraculous demonstration of the power of the gospel has resulted in many coming to faith.

Today, in "the Chinese Century," China's church is preparing to take the gospel beyond China's borders. The "Back to Jerusalem Movement," birthed in the hearts of Chinese believers in the 1930s, has experienced a revival among leaders of China's house church movement.

## 2 Equip Yourself for Success

—*Receive Pre-Field and On-Field Training.* Utilize the experience of veteran workers/agencies to inform, equip and guide your vision. Take time to inform your vision.

Know the value of training, research and short-term trips. (The Morrison Center can help—see the summer 2004 issue of *ChinaSource*.)

—*Establish & Maintain Church/Agency/Candidate Relationships.* These relationships are essential to effective-

tiveness and member care. You cannot be "apostolic" without being "sent."

—*Achieve Acculturation and Language Acquisition.* These are key to effectiveness and heart impact.

—*Maintain a Balanced and Holistic Lifestyle.* Adopt a servant/learner posture. Seek health, not speed. Receive from the local culture. Maintain your home identity while you acculturate. Remember that you are still an outsider; you will never be "Chinese." Avoid the two extremes of, on the one hand, seeking to conform your surroundings to the culture you left behind, and, on the other, seeking to become "Chinese" to the extent that you lose your own identity. God gave us two ears to one mouth and two eyes to one brain. He wants us to listen before we speak and to seek to perceive before passing judgments.

## 3 Emulate Proven Effective Methods

—*Operate in a Relational Ministry Context.* The secret to effective and safe service in China is to reach out to and touch those with whom you have established relationships. In Chinese culture, the emphasis is on the dynamics of the group versus individual identity. Do not ignore the group context when relating to individuals. Ministry should be organic, growing out of the specific situation you are in, versus formulaic. Choose people over projects and depth of, over numbers of, relationships.

—*Participate in a Team Model.* The team provides a healthy model for longevity and balance. This is where character is developed and modeled. The team provides a place for comprehensive and complimentary giftings as each member does his or her part. The team also is essential to our testimony as it bears witness to the unity of the Body of Christ.

—*Maintain a Local/Indigenous Church Focus.*



Ken Benintendi





Commit to planting and strengthening indigenous churches as a primary strategic objective. Other ministry and outreach is subordinate to this objective. Serve, submit to, support and strengthen local church leadership at home and abroad.

—**Use Replicable Models and Reap The Multiplication Factor.** Work vicariously through local believers. Take someone with you so you can be developing others. Be a catalyst more than a primary mover. Help people grow into their place of effectiveness and then fade into the background. Give seeds not grain. Teach to fish rather than give a fish.

—**Ascribe to Lasting Ministry Goals.** Serve long-term goals in all short-term strategies. Short-term efforts should be coordinated with those doing long-term work. Make sure adequate follow-up is provided.

## 4 Do God's Work God's Way

—**Rely on the Holy Spirit.**

"Not by might (human ability), not by power (human strength) but by My Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts" (Zech. 4:6). One *kairos* moment equals 100 "Roman Road" or "Four Spiritual Laws" presentations. To be effective we need the:

—Fruit of the Spirit: "Against such things there is no law" (Gal. 5:23).

—Gifts of the Spirit: To overcome impossible problems and circumstances.

—Sanctification of the Spirit: Set apart for God's purposes.

—Unity of the Spirit: That they might know.

We need the Spirit's leading more than a strong agenda.

—**Minister Out of Grace not Law.** Effective service requires a balance of grace, faith and works. We need to stress identity in Christ over performance, character over duty and faith over works.

**Ray Sharpe** has served both in and out of China for the past 14 years. Currently he is recruiting and training workers for cross-cultural service and travels to China several times a year. ✍

**For Thy Kinsman's Sake**  
Continued from page 7

## Ministry Characteristics of Diaspora Chinese Models

This section will discuss some of the characteristics of Diaspora Chinese ministries in China. It will be followed by a discussion of possible points of convergence between the Diaspora Chinese and Western sector.

First, Diaspora Chinese do not necessarily see China ministry as their response to the Great Commission; rather, many choose to work in their ancestral village. Among the Diaspora Chinese there is a lack of cross-cultural vision and little discussion of unreached peoples. Thus, Cantonese believers from Hong Kong will not invest time to learn Mandarin to reach non-Cantonese peoples. While many are involved in urban ministry, few see the unreached Muslim Hui communities in the same city. By far, most of the ministries are reaching Han people.

However, the lack in strategy and vision is compensated for by volume, frequency and effectiveness. One small denomination in Hong Kong sends in teams by chartered tourist buses. Diaspora Chinese churches from North America send their pastors into China several times a year. While there are still subtle cultural differences between China and the culture of the Diaspora Chinese, the latter can, by and large, function with little adjustment and cultural shock.

Most Diaspora Chinese involvement is on an independent small-scale operations basis. There is usually not much coordination and networking with other ministries. This may hamper any benefit of synergy. Yet, they are all low profile and do not attract unnecessary scrutiny.

Finally, Diaspora Chinese carry the traditional Chinese pragmatic spirit, enabling them to understand the fuzziness of Chinese culture. Different interpretations and implementations of a central policy in varying localities and contexts do not surprise them. They are ingenious in finding alternate ways to resolve a problem. While outsiders are not allowed to preach in Three Self churches, many Diaspora Chinese have shared for fifty minutes followed by a ten minute sermon from the local Three Self pastor. Although many still have unresolved fear of the atheist government from their first-

hand experience of escaping from China in the late 1940s and early 1950s, they are still zealous in their commitment towards ministry in China.

## Towards Synergy between East and West

There have not been many established partnerships between Diaspora Chinese and Westerners in China ministry. Most Western-hosted conferences on China are not well attended by Diaspora Chinese. However, that does not mean there is no room for partnership.

Diaspora Chinese can benefit from the strong cross-cultural emphasis of Western models. They should be challenged to reach beyond the Han Chinese. At the same time, Diaspora Chinese can also help international agencies orient their ministry towards China. They can certainly serve as consultants and give significant insight into shaping China ministries in these agencies.

Certainly, the great multitude "from every nation, tribe, people and language" in Revelation 7:9 should include both Diaspora Chinese and Caucasians. If we are to join forces in eternal worship one day, we should start practicing today in ministry for China.

### Endnotes

1. There has been much debate about how the term Diaspora Chinese should be defined. For the purpose of this article, an anthropological definition will be used. Diaspora Chinese refers to the Chinese communities outside of Mainland China (PRC) whose worldview (expressed mostly commonly in terms of cultural and linguistic orientation) is predominately Chinese. This is based on the Chinese term *hua qiao*, literally meaning "ethnic Chinese sojourners." The term is used in contrast to ethnic Chinese who are raised outside of China and have integrated more with the local host culture.

2. The two most widely distributed Chinese Christian magazines, *Overseas Campus* and *Life Quarterly*, are both produced by Diaspora Chinese.

3. For the rest of the article, second and third generation foreign born Chinese will be lumped together with other Western groups as their worldview and approach to China ministry are similar.

**Yi Du Kam** has extensive China experience and now works with multiethnic teams in China. ✍



Participants in a "China Today!" Event spend time in prayer.

Photo courtesy China Today

## "China Today!" Events Educate, Motivate and Mobilize

Mary Gilliam

**D**uring 2002, Gideon Christian Fellowship sent its first ten workers to China. For CaroLynn Tucker, going to China with an international outreach team was the fulfillment of a vision she and other church members had nurtured for several years. Although they had the vision, they had no idea how to accomplish it or where to go for advice. But in 2001, CaroLynn and her husband Eric, an elder at their church, were invited to a "China Today!" Event held in New Orleans. There, CaroLynn and Eric saw the opportunity for their vision to become real.

"We had the desire to get involved, but we did not know how," says CaroLynn. "We had tried to establish contacts in the past, but they did not seem to work out. At the 'China Today!' Event, we gained the know-how to achieve doable, practical goals for our mission. 'China Today!' showed clearly what the needs in China are, and how we could help meet them. And what made it all so exciting was the enthusiasm of the speakers. Their love for China and her people was infectious. It just made us want to get involved. And all

the speakers were so approachable. They just helped us in any way that they could."

Since 2002, Gideon, a non-denominational New Orleans church with a predominately African American congregation, has made three trips to China. In 2002, their team traveled to Xining, in 2003, to Urumqi, and in June of 2004, to Tibet. The church plans to continue its outreach focus to China indefinitely. Their China activities have created a snowballing effect on their international outreach as a whole. The church now has an expanded outreach ministry—growing at such a rate that the church renamed it "Impact Missions." In 2003, a China contact resulted in including Africa as another outreach focus with church teams traveling there in 2003 and 2004.

CaroLynn Tucker's experience at the "China Today!" Event is typical. Ever since the first "China Today!" Event was held in Wichita, Kansas in 1998, people attending them have had the same kind of response. "China Today!" events have helped churches and communities across cities and regions inform and mobilize those who want to serve in China.

The purpose of a "China Today!" Event is to impact the hearts, minds and

actions of a community of believers by presenting international experts and their insights on the history, persecution and subsequent growth of the Chinese and North Korean churches. "China Today!" events don't focus on the work of just one agency. The event covers a full day featuring top Christian leaders who currently work with the Chinese and North Korean churches. The strength of the event is that it presents information from leaders of a variety of organizations doing work in China—each with its own unique perspective and area of influence. These men and women share personal knowledge of the trials and joys experienced by the Chinese church, communicate the needs it is facing, and provide practical ways to participate and connect believers with relevant organizations. A greater vision for China is birthed. Relationships are forged between leaders and communities of believers as they participate in pastors' luncheons and mock house church services, and share their stories in area church services. Greater levels of involvement with China are produced long term as people respond to the call of God to intercede, give, mobilize and go to the field.

### What a Basic "China Today!" Seminar Looks Like

A basic "China Today!" Event setting presents a powerful daylong experience for attendees that respond to the call of Proverbs 31:8: "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of those who are destitute." In New Orleans in 2001, the day-long event featured five speakers relating firsthand knowledge of the churches in China and North Korea. Typical "China Today!" events feature three or more speakers. These speakers clearly articulate what the history, condition and needs of the Chinese and North Korean churches are. They inspire believers to action and then provide information on practical ways to serve. Speakers then introduce the names of organizations that participants may partner with in order to achieve their specific mission focus. Lunch is often offered as part of the event allowing for more informal discussion to occur between the speakers and those attending. In New Orleans, a continental breakfast was served allowing those who wanted to come early to meet speakers, view exhibits about international out-

reach opportunities and obtain literature in their special areas of interest.

The days before and after the seminar are opportunities for the speakers to maximize their community impact by speaking at local area churches and pastors' meetings. This allows relationships and awareness to be built on multiple levels with a more diverse group of believers. It also allows those who were not able to attend the actual event the opportunity to hear testimonies and firsthand accounts of outreach activities. Some "China Today!" events may include a house church service presented the evening before the "China Today!" Event to promote the seminar and demonstrate what it is like to worship in a place of persecution. This type of meeting will often draw many who might not attend the event but could participate for an evening. The New Orleans event included a communion service where several participants stood and proclaimed "I have not been served" as a way of representing the needs of underserved minorities in China. Such experiences have underscored the need for special attention to those minorities. Several churches then adopted specific minorities as their special area of attention.

### Potential Outcomes of "China Today!" Events

In the past, the outcomes that have flowed from a "China Today!" Event have resulted in members of a local Christian community developing an informed, renewed or even initial energy to learn more about China and to serve the Chinese church. Typical reactions are that attendees go back to their home churches and organize short- or long-term international outreach trips. In several cases, attendees at "China Today!" events have entered long-term service in China. Attendees return to their home churches ready to share the information they have learned with their pastors, Sunday School classes, or outreach directors. In some cases, attendees who were not able to travel to China themselves have become supporters of ministries which serve China.

The church in China continues to grow at an unprecedented rate, with an estimated 40 to 90 million believers currently serving the Lord, mostly through unregistered house churches. However, millions more wait to hear the name of

Jesus. While an indigenous church thrives, many challenges exist due to persecution, lack of training and insufficient Bibles and materials. In North Korea, serving Jesus is forbidden and believers are put to death regularly. The Chinese church is persecuted and tolerated, hidden and open, flourishing and struggling. The political climate makes open proclamation of the gospel difficult. The voices of Chinese believers are rarely heard in the international press. Their struggles are not widely known in the United States. The "China Today!" Event seeks to put into context the seemingly confusing paradoxes about serving effectively in China and clarify outreach opportunities. "China Today!" Event attendees leave energized and motivated to join the Lord in His work in China and North Korea.

### Presenting a "China Today!" Event

China Harvest staff member, Mary Gilliam, is available to assist churches or individual organizers to develop and pres-

ent "China Today!" events. Mary, along with her team, works directly with the event organizers in each city to help facilitate and provide information and ongoing support for their event. In addition, China Harvest has developed a "China Today!" planning manual which is available to anyone wishing to produce a "China Today!" event. The manual contains helpful guidelines for planning, a timeline to keep planning on track and in perspective, materials for marketing and public relations, and information on how to organize and get started. Instructions, letters of introduction, sponsorship, and tracking and follow up materials for a seminar are included in this manual. Mary is also available to work with local organizers in establishing topics and speakers for the event, assisting with public relations activities and materials and in the actual implementation of the event.

**For more information:** contact China Harvest at 1-800-715-3292 or Mary Gilliam at [mary@gilliam.com](mailto:mary@gilliam.com).

### Sample topics and activities of a "China Today!" Event

- What you and your church can do
- Short term trips to China
- Unreached people groups of China
- Testimonies of Chinese believers
- Church planting in China
- The church in North Korea
- Platforms for service in China
- Campus ministry to reach Chinese students in the United States
- Praying for China and North Korea
- Serving as a professional in China
- Training for long-term service
- Is there religious freedom in China?
- and more

Topics and activities change as the dynamics of service and outreach opportunities in China and North Korea change.

Photos courtesy China Today





# Peoples of China

## Reaching Urban Professionals

Frank Peterson

**A** Christian Chinese doctor stood with a small group of Chinese believers on the 20th floor of a hotel overlooking their city. He asked them to take a good look at the city below. "There are 400,000 people out there who have never heard the gospel," he said. "Unless we do something about it, they are going to die and go to hell." Deeply moved, the believers responded with commitment. Six months later the group of eight Christians had grown to 96 and is still growing. One man boldly shared his burden, and now others are boldly sharing the gospel.

- A restaurant owner has been fervent about sharing the gospel with her employees and customers. As a result, all of the restaurant workers are believers, many of the customers have heard the gospel, and some have embraced Christ as their own personal Savior.

- Chinese business professionals and senior executives are meeting with Christian Chinese businessmen to learn the secrets to personal success. After learning that personal success comes from godly character, and that godly character comes from a relationship with God, many have embraced this truth and committed their lives to Jesus Christ.

- Christian Chinese factory owners and general managers have trained and equipped thousands of factory workers in the economic development zones across the country to share their faith with their fellow workers. In some of the factories, thousands are coming to Christ each year.

Clearly, God is doing something among urban professionals in China. They are not only turning to Christ by the hundreds; they are using their influence to make the gospel available to thousands, even millions of others.

### Urban Professionals in China Today

Urban professionals are a small, but rapidly growing portion of the population of China. While some of them are quite wealthy, most belong to the emerging middle class which is currently estimated to include about 180 million people but is projected to grow to 400 million in the next eight years.<sup>1</sup>

They are generally college educated and upwardly mobile. They are computer literate and internet savvy. Many are caught up in the pursuit of wealth and personal success, but others are thoughtfully wrestling with deeper issues:

- Why am I here?

- What can I believe in?
- What can I do to make a contribution to my country?

Urban professionals are increasingly being targeted by marketers of all kinds of consumer goods and services, from cosmetics to automobiles, and they are buying (see box).

Clearly, the lure of materialism is strong in China today. However, this is not the whole picture. A growing number of urban professionals in China today are discovering that material things and the pleasures of this world do not satisfy, and they are looking for spiritual reality. Christians who are seeking to make disciples among them are finding many to be very responsive.

### The Emerging Urban Professional Church

To a large extent, the emerging urban church can be seen as the fruit of the past few decades of outreach to Chinese college students, both in China and in other parts of the world. Among urban professionals, new churches are springing up that are filled with people who were led to Christ by Christian teachers while they were students. One well-informed urban Chinese Christian leader estimates that seventy percent of the members of these new churches were led to Christ by foreign teachers.

These churches, however, are not all alike. They are made up of people from many walks of life and of varying ages:

- Students from universities
- Young professionals
- Middle age intellectuals and professionals
- Intellectuals and professionals returning from abroad

Graham Cousens



### Socio-economic Summary of China's Consumers

|                            | Annual Household Income (RMB '000) | Number of households (millions) | Age group |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Urban professionals</b> |                                    |                                 |           |
| Wealthy Class              | Over 100                           | 2.8                             | 30-65     |
| Middle-income class        | 30-100                             | 24.1                            | 24-45     |
| Comfortable class          | 10-30                              | 150.5                           | 20-35     |
| Subsistence class          | 5-10                               | 106.2                           | 18-60     |
| Poverty class              | Less than 5                        | 15.2                            | 15-65     |

"Youth Consumers & Leisure Trends in China - A Market Analysis," figure 2.1 (Access Asia; <http://www.marketresearch.com/researchindex/859783.html>)

## Targeted by marketers, urban professionals are buying



Graham Cousins

- **Retail sales in China broke RMB 4,000 billion in 2002, a growth of 8.8%.**
- **Thirty-eight million urban families currently can afford to spend the nearly US \$12,000 required to buy a new car. More than 70% of the adults living in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou (combined population of 33 million) plan to buy a car in the next five years.\***
- **Retail growth in 2002 over what it was in 2001:**
  - in **telecommunications:** 69.2%
  - in **cars:** 73%
  - in **household appliances:** 14.6%
- **Sales of houses grew by 43.9% for the first seven months of 2003 compared with the same period of 2002 while car sales grew by 77.1%.**
- The market for **toiletries and cosmetics** has passed US \$3 billion and is expected to reach US \$22 billion by 2013.\*\*

Sources: \* China State Economic Information Center, November 2002;  
\*\* [www.business-in-asia.com/china\\_consumer.html](http://www.business-in-asia.com/china_consumer.html)

- White collar middle class workers
- Business people

While it is encouraging to see what is already happening, it is clear that much more needs to be done in the area of church planting and church nurture among urban professionals in China. Young urban professionals are very different from the generations that preceded them, and new types of urban churches are needed.

One of the great differences between older and younger Chinese Christians is the extent to which the younger generation wants to be engaged in community transformation. Most older Christians in China tend to shy away from social engagement, especially in the political arena, preferring to focus on preaching those aspects of the gospel that relate to getting ready for heaven. That is understandable, considering the severe social and political limitations under which the church has had to operate since 1949. But there is a growing sense among younger Christians in China that, without letting go of its evangelistic mandate, the church also has a responsibility to impact society.

They believe that the time has come for the church to reach out and seek to meet the needs of the poor and needy, stepping into the gap left by a government unable to cope with the overwhelming social problems in China to-

day. There is also a growing sense among younger urban Christian leaders that they must lead the way in creating a hopeful future for China. They see the church as a sustaining force for change.

### How Can We Help?

Perhaps the most helpful thing Christians who want to aid the emerging urban professional church in China can do is to model and emphasize a holistic approach to ministry. Urban professionals in China today need to see and hear the whole gospel, which includes both the hope of eternal life and the hope of transformed lives and communities right here, right now. They need to see and be encouraged to develop models of ministry that demonstrate the integration of Christian faith with the whole of life.

Urban professionals in China today need to hear a clarion call to a discipleship that involves a dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ, being advocates of justice, doing acts of mercy, standing for social righteousness, making a contribution to the economic health of their community and country, and being a light to the nations. They need to be encouraged and assisted as they work out in both an intellectual and practical sense what it means to live out the gospel in the complex, rapidly-changing culture of China today.

One critical thing we who come from

outside must not do is to build ministry around ourselves. Many sad stories could be recounted of campus ministries that disintegrated after the foreign teacher left or churches that faltered after the foreign church planter left. These failed models of ministry have no place in China today. In our attempts to reach urban professionals, let us from the beginning seek to discern those local individuals whom God has gifted to lead His church, and build the work around them. As the Apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians,

We're only servants. Through us God caused you to believe. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. 6 My job was to plant the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God, not we, who made it grow. 7 The ones who do the planting or watering aren't important, but God is important because he is the one who makes the seed grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters work as a team with the same purpose. Yet they will be rewarded individually, according to their own hard work. 9 We work together as partners who belong to God. *You are God's field, God's building—not ours.* (1 Cor. 3:5-9 NLT—emphasis mine)

### Endnotes

1. "Emerging middle class reshaping China" by David J. Lynch, *USA Today*, 11/11/2002.

**Frank Peterson** has been engaged in mobilizing Christians to serve the peoples of China for more than 21 years. He is currently living and working in China. 卐

## Book Review

# Jesus in Beijing

A review by John Peace

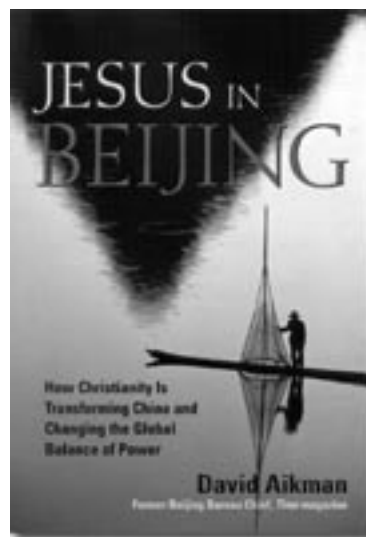
***Jesus in Beijing: How Christianity is Transforming China and Changing the Global Balance of Power*, by David Aikman. Regnery Publishing, Washington, D.C., 2003. 344 pages including index. ISBN 0-89526-128-6, hardcover. Cost \$27.95 at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)**

David Aikman has given us perhaps the most useful introduction to the explosive increase and growing influence of Christianity in China. With a Ph.D. in history, the former *Time* magazine Bureau Chief in Beijing and Moscow possesses the necessary background for a big-picture assessment of the expanding role of Christians within Chinese society. Add to that an eye for personal detail, aggressive investigative reporting, courage, wit and a great deal of hard work,

policy. Specifically, evangelical Christians could tilt their nation towards America in the global conflict between Islam and the West.

Despite such claims on the dust jacket and in the first and final chapters, the heart of the book lies in the vivid portraits Aikman paints of intrepid missionaries and fearless Chinese believers over a span of more than a thousand years.

Aikman begins with the story of early missionary efforts in China, from the Nestorians in the 7th century, followed by Franciscans in the 13th century, to the Jesuits in the 16th century. Each time, foreigners fell victim to Chinese politics and



offers thrilling proof, not only of survival, but of unprecedented growth.

Following a roughly chronological order, the author introduces us first to the "Patriarchs"—a handful of stalwart pastors who endured decades of harsh treatment in prison because they would not join the state-controlled Protestant Three

Self Patriotic Movement "church." Interviews with these brave men provide the basis for brief sketches of their sufferings and their profound impact upon the current generation of believers who have been inspired by the courage of their elders.

Next come the "Uncles"—leaders in their forties and fifties who now guide tens of millions of believers in "house church" networks. They, too,

have undergone brutal persecution for refusing to bow the knee to Caesar, by joining the government-sponsored Three-Self Patriotic Movement "church" (TSPM). Imprisonment, cruel beatings, and the indescribable agony inflicted by the electric stun-gun have failed to dampen their zeal or commitment to evangelism.

Aikman also introduces us to "Aunts, Nephews, and Nieces," who follow in the footsteps of the Patriarchs and Uncles to take the message of Christ to China's millions. He traces the growth of house churches, describes miracles and quotes joyful believers from all walks of life.

Theologians will notice his bias towards "charismatic" forms of Christianity and his less-than-limpid analysis of their apparent misunderstanding of reformed doctrine. He does not dispute the belief among Chinese believers that twenty to thirty percent of their countrymen will be Christian within a few decades, but neither does he try to analyze what "Christian" might mean under those circumstances.

Currently, evangelism is done in such a way that millions of professions of faith result, but the reality or depth of those conversions is often questionable. The world view of such "Christians" usually

**The heart of the book lies in the vivid portraits Aikman paints of intrepid missionaries and fearless Chinese believers over a span of more than a thousand years.**

and you have the ingredients of a stirring account of one of the most momentous developments in modern times.

According to Aikman, we are talking not just about an incredible increase in the number of Chinese Christians over the past fifty years (from one or two million to more than 70 million), but what might become a fundamental shift in world power alignments. In other words, the spread of a vibrant Christian faith throughout all echelons of society could produce a "critical mass" of believers that would impact both domestic and foreign

were driven out or suppressed.

The history of the Protestant church in China starts with the heroic efforts of Robert Morrison who arrived in Canton (now called Guangzhou) in 1807. His translation of the Bible laid the foundation for the substantial success of thousands of Protestant missionaries from the West in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century.

When Mao took control of China, however, all foreigners once again had to leave. Many wondered whether the Chinese church would survive. *Jesus in Beijing*



lacks depth and breadth. Only a handful of them may have the means or opportunity to apply anything like a biblical standard to the questions of their society so that their political influence would be uneven at best. Nevertheless, in a chapter on "Artists, Writers, and Academics," Aikman offers solid evidence for his optimism about the coming cultural impact of Christianity upon even the upper levels of Chinese society.

Aikman admits that China could still lurch towards aggressive nationalism in the near future. He does not mention the possibility that a strong anti-Christian reaction with ruthless and thoroughgoing persecution could push the church to the margins of society as has happened a number of times in the past several hundred years, but the book offers plenty of grounds for not being surprised if that happens.

However, Aikman is a reporter, not a theorist, and he keeps his focus clear: to relate to those on the outside the activities and attitudes of a truly remarkable array of ardent followers of Jesus.

Several well-researched chapters take us into the complex world of both the Three Self Patriotic Movement and of the two Roman Catholic organizations (one loyal to Rome, the other at least nominally subservient to the government). He includes a very balanced survey of the role of foreign Christians in China over the past couple of decades.

He has received some criticism for revealing more information about some Christian ministries operating in China than seems necessary. He responds by observing that the Chinese already know what Christians are doing and don't really have time to listen in on every conversation. But his detractors, though admitting that the police know more than we would like, reply that it is better not to make the Christian work of foreigners so prominent that the government is compelled to crack down. Perhaps his role as a reporter has kept him from seeing things as would those who live and minister among Chinese.

He also points out the danger of splits, cults and heresies. The horrendous turmoil resulting from the Taiping Rebellion in the mid-19th century shows what a cult can do. China's leaders are aware of that history and are zealous to quash any

## Resource Corner

### Intercessors for China 2005 Prayer Calendar

#### Pray for China and her persecuted church:

- **Pray strategically** with informative monthly profiles and beautiful photographs.
- **Pray comprehensively** focusing each week on one of China's 660 cities.
- **Pray specifically** with daily items relating individual stories and needs.

Available in English or Chinese.  
(Please specify when ordering)

1 to 4 calendars: \$5.75 ea.  
5 to 49 calendars: \$4.50 ea.  
50 to 249 calendars: \$3.75 ea.  
250 to 499 calendars: \$3.25 ea.  
500 or more calendars: \$2.75 ea.

**Please note:** Prices do not include shipping. Standard shipping is USPS regular delivery.

such movement. They do not know how to distinguish true religion from false; thus, their blows could (and often do) fall on orthodox groups.

In the end, however, *Jesus in Beijing* is mostly about the indomitable house church movement which, starting as a tiny seed in the dark soil of remote villages during the days of the Cultural Revolution, has blossomed into a marvelous garden of immense variety and beauty.

David Aikman (now an American citi-

zen) joins the select company of English-born China researchers—Leslie Lyall, David Adeney, Tony Lambert, Ross Pater-son—whose superb studies over the past four decades have refreshed the tired, complacent and sometimes even jaded hearts of Western Christians. May their tribe increase!

**John Peace, Ph.D.,** engages in research about Chinese religion and culture. 信



**Special Feature for the 2005 edition: Chinese Christian women**—Monthly profiles feature heroines of the faith like Dr. Mary Stone, Christiana Tsai, Mrs. Wang Mingdao, Dora Yu, and others. Daily items continue the focus on women.

#### U.S. customers may call:

1-888-462-5481

#### or write to:

Ambassadors for Christ  
21A Leaman Road  
P.O. Box 280  
Paradise, PA 17562-0280

#### For more information or to order go to:

[www.prayforchina.com](http://www.prayforchina.com)

# The Party's Not Over

As lifestyles in many Chinese cities increasingly mirror those of China's Asian neighbors and market forces push the boundaries in areas that were once tightly regulated, it is sometimes easy to forget that China is still under the control of the Chinese Communist Party.

In its effort to promote a strong and prosperous China, the Party *has* loosened its grip considerably in many areas of society. People have greater freedom than ever in deciding where they will live, what they will do for a living, and how to spend their leisure time. China's entry into the World Trade Organization has subjected her to international business and legal standards and opened China's markets to international competition.

While China continues down a course of rapid economic and cultural opening, it seems paradoxical that, in the area of spiritual life, the Party seeks to maintain tight supervision. A few principles are worth keeping in mind for Christians serving in China who desire to make a positive contribution while avoiding entanglement in the

Party's tentacles of control.

**Learn from history.** The party's suspicion of spiritual activities predates the Party itself. China has a long and colorful history of movements, such as the Taiping Rebellion in the 1850s, that succeeded in gathering millions of followers to attempt an overthrow of the regime. The *Falungong* movement that burst onto the scene in the 1990s was a *déjà vu* experience for Party leaders with a sense of history, and their forceful response was typical of what would have been expected in past dynasties.



Brent Fulton

**Check your politics at the door.** In the minds of many Chinese, Christianity is linked historically with the opium trade and the bullying China suffered at the hands of Western imperial powers. It is no wonder, then, that the Party suspects that Christians from abroad come with political motives. To dispel this assumption we need to avoid the appearance of identifying with a particular political cause or group. We should also refrain from discussing topics (such as the relationship between the PRC and Taiwan) that are known to be politically sensitive.

**The less said the better.** The scope of

what you are able to do in China is inversely proportional to your need to talk about it. High-profile publicity about one's work in China is usually counter-productive, as it raises questions about motives and forces officials who would otherwise not get involved to take a closer look in order to save face and prove that they are doing their jobs. The triumphalism sometimes heard in Christian circles in the West smacks to Chinese ears of cultural arrogance, creating a stumbling block to the message we are trying to convey.

**Remember why you're there.** Regardless of who is in power, the fact remains that Christians inside and outside China are called to care for the people of China and to pursue God's best for the country. If we focus on being a blessing rather than on the political constraints that remain a fact of life in China we will be more likely to leave a positive legacy.

**Brent Fulton, Ph.D.,** is the president of ChinaSource and the editor of the ChinaSource journal. 信

ChinaSource

Partnering Resources with Vision

P.O. Box 4343, Fullerton, CA 92834

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID

FULLERTON CA  
PERMIT NO. 98

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED