

Dear Prayer Partners,

I have been traveling quite a bit and so let me give a report of my trips first:

### **Chinese Publication Committee (CPC) Meeting in Hong Kong**

This is actually the last time we will refer to ourselves as CPC! During the meeting, we have decided to adopt a new name - Chinese Communications Committee ("CCC") - in order to reflect our interest in non-print communication as well. Business aside, the fellowship I have been able to have with Chinese leaders from a few Asian centres of OMF International (Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore & Malaysia) has also been a valuable part of the experience.

### **Thailand - Mekong Centre & Bangkok**

While in Thailand, we met OMF's field leaders and ministry workers. One of the highlights for us is the time we got to spend with our Urban Poor team in Bangkok. Simple things like giving hair-cuts in urban slums can go a long way!

One of the privileges we have in ministry travel is that we don't get to pamper ourselves with 5 star hotels and air-conditioned coach buses. Instead, we travel like the locals. Here's a picture of myself and Ceci on a boat, which few "tourists" would take according to our local colleagues. The waters it sails through is so dirty that there are plastic sheets on the sides to protect the riders from the toxic splashes:

While Thailand is widely perceived as a Buddhist country, what we actually see in everyday life is just the antithesis of what one would expect of a country so steeped in a belief system that holds up detachment from desire as the way out of suffering. Here's a picture that's taken from the busy streets of Bangkok, and it brings out something of that incongruence:

Some of this can be explained by the fact that it's an animistic version of Buddhism that the common populace holds to, where shrines and statues are believed to bring protection and prosperity. It's a system of fear where one is expected to please the myriad millions of gods in the spiritual realm in order to avoid bad luck and hopefully acquire some good one. At its root, it's brute materialism and superstition. The huge interconnecting shopping malls in Bangkok have in some ways become the modern "temples" of this religion. As an ethnic Chinese myself, I am no stranger to this brand of Buddhism. Please hold the people of Thailand in prayer and ask that they be delivered from the spirit of fear to the glorious hope of our Lord Jesus Christ!

## **Diaspora Ministry Task Force Meeting in Birmingham, UK**

This is the group I have been working with through Skype and personal meetings for the last 13 months! Dr. Sam George (to my left in the picture) is a walking encyclopedia in the field of Diaspora Ministry. Hans Walter Ritter, Carolyn Kemp and Sydney Witbooi are some of OMF's top international leaders. I felt like I was living in the land of giants! We put our heads and hearts together as we prayerfully crafted a report to OMF's International Leadership Team about the place of diaspora ministry in the OMF context. Indeed, right from its inception, the human story has been one of people on the move - think of how Adam and Eve were exiled from the Garden of Eden, how Abraham was called to leave his home country to an unknown land, and how the mass dispersion occurred at the Tower of Babel, etc.) In terms of OMF's own history, China Inland Mission became Overseas Missionary Fellowship when our predecessors continued their missions outreach by following the Chinese diaspora in East Asia shortly after the 'reluctant exodus'. Could it be that we are standing at a juncture in history where the Lord is once again calling us to step into a brand new direction in response to the diaspora movements that He has divinely ordained?

## **Macau**

Between Hong Kong and Thailand, we took advantage of a free day we had to visit Macau - the place where myself and Ceci started dating close to 30 years ago. While there, we visited the oft-forgotten Morrison Chapel. It's a place few tourists would go to because it looks so "shabby" compared to the huge Roman Catholic establishments and pompous casinos around. Yet, this is the place where, 50 years before Hudson Taylor, the first protestant missionary Robert Morrison quietly started his ministry to the Chinese. We owe the faith that we have today to the self-less devotion of these early pioneers!

## **Missions Fest Alberta in Edmonton**

This is the trip I just came back from yesterday. I had the privilege to speak in a workshop there, and hope that it will open up connection opportunities for our local representatives. A huge side-benefit for me s to have heard Rev. Hyeon Soo Lim (the Canadian Korean pastor who spent over 2 years in solitary confinement in North Korea) personally during the conference. Exuding vision and passion, he shows absolutely no sign of PTSD at all!

## **Perspectives**

- taught a class at Knox
- will be teaching another one at North York Chinese Baptist Church - one that combines two history lessons into one. Covet your prayer as I have never done this before

### **Mobilization Workshop on Buddhism:**

We joined hands with Toronto Alliance Church to feature our colleague K. as the keynote speaker in a gathering for those who are active in local outreach to Tibetans here in Toronto. Thank you for those of you who were there!

### **The Christian Talking Book Library**

This is the ministry where I serve as a volunteer Board member. The Trudeau government's recent introduction of the abortion clause in its Canada Summer Job grant applications have created no small controversy. While we deeply respect those in the Christian community who have chosen to take a different approach, we as a ministry have decided to make a statement by not submitting an application this year and instead look to the Lord for His own provision in the face of this change.

### **Pastoral**

It's always encouraging for a pastor to see himself multiplied. Remember Crystal - this is the blind sister I had the privilege to baptize a few months ago? She is currently in an institution for the treatment of a disorder. Because of my travel schedule, I have not had an opportunity to visit her myself, and yet the young people have stepped up and basically become mini-pastors themselves, offering her care and love by group visits from time to time!

On a sadder note, I attended the memorial service of a sister of one of my best friends. She was only a few years our senior - relatively young for this to happen, and yet the whole service was marked with a spirit of thankfulness. She waited 17 long years for her husband to come to Christ, the whole time bearing testimony not only with words but with the way she lived her life! Please remember her son in prayer, and ask that he be brought to a living faith with our Lord Jesus Christ as well!

### **Personal and Family**

Please continue to pray for:

- Ruth's needs for her education in Ireland
- Dawn's need for a full time job with good career prospects
- My 90-year-old mom's need for long term care facilities

God bless.

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