

ASIA – CENTRAL

A special occasion

David and Lynda, teaching English in Central Asia

David and I were invited to our first Chinese wedding when the brother of one of our students was being married. The journey to their village took about two hours on the bus, and then 30 minutes walk through muddy streets. It was zero degrees and trying to snow.


We had been told that our student had a lovely large home and as we entered, we saw the guests already seated in an open courtyard with a dirt floor and a tarpaulin covering. We were welcomed like royalty and treated accordingly. The parents of the groom and his sister (our student) welcomed us first. Then we met the bride, who wore a beautiful white silk gown together with a red jacket (to prevent her from freezing) and the groom, who wore a suit. Everyone else was in casual gear.

We were seated like dignitaries in the parents' bedroom, which was what we would call a lounge room. The mother and other older ladies were lying on a platform at one end of this room covered in blankets. Underneath was an unseen wood fire.

After the greetings, the first course arrived. This meal consisted of about eight dishes of cold meats (we had not seen so much meat since arriving here), vegetables and plenty of a local form of bread. After this we were invited to the bride and groom's bedroom which was decked out in red decorations with satin quilts covering their bed. Traditional red Chinese blessings and decorations were hanging everywhere. Through interpreters, we wished the bride and groom many years of happiness, with much laughter and joy.

After a while we were ushered outside onto the street where the whole village had volunteered to play the drums and dance. There were also the traditional fireworks which follow you wherever you go, at weddings, funerals, business openings and so on. David and I were invited to dance with the villagers. We were the first foreigners to visit this village, so the one and only video camera followed our every step. We were never quite certain as to how long we should continue these antics, but the dancing kept our bodies warm in the zero degrees. Then came the speeches.

Each parent made a speech and gave the couple a gift of money in a red envelope. This is a typical Chinese tradition of wishing the couple good luck or blessings. Upon receiving these gifts, the couple responded with Mama (Mother) and Baba (Father), signifying that both sets of parents were now legally mother and father to both bride and groom.





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Despite being nervous, David was asked to give a speech. I reminded him beforehand of things that we were told by one of our team members to say. (I'm sure it didn't help.) He was able to say to the bride and groom that our heavenly Father would bless them. As David was giving the speech, I tried to point out that he was talking to the bride's parents by mistake. When he finished, I was asked to speak and proceeded to tell the parents how wonderful and hard working their daughter was, only to find that David was right and I was actually talking to the groom's parents! As you can imagine, I crawled back to my seat in shame. After the speeches there was more dancing and we thought the celebrations were over, only to find ourselves eating another meal which consisted of even more dishes than before (both hot and cold), and yes, more bread. We eventually rolled home with full bellies.

As we walked back to the bus station along the muddy village road, we were delighted to see a church building with an active program. Our greatest desire is to share our lives and our love for God with our students, so that any future wedding invitations might involve our heavenly Father. As we returned on the bus, David was able to share his "Father" story with one student and I was able to share my "Father" story with both the students who accompanied us to and from the wedding. As the day finished, we rejoiced at the best day we have had so far, and the privilege of spending such a special day with these beautiful people.





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The word spreads

In an area where few people have heard the message of life and hope through Jesus Christ, Global Interaction workers were delighted to hear about a group of believers on the move! Members of the group have been anointed and appointed to move to a distant area to encourage and assist a young local couple who are working amongst another people group. The Global Interaction staff workers write, "To date, this little group of followers have resisted concerted efforts to make them give up, and they are obediently offering life-giving news and hope to any who ask questions. Please uphold each servant because not only are they away from families and friends, but they also encounter situations which need wisdom and incredible fortitude."





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Seeds – planted, growing and multiplying

Melodie, a new believer, had been attending a house church, but had stopped because she didn't feel at home in that group. When she told a Global Interaction couple about this, they made a temporary arrangement to meet with her regularly until a more appropriate house meeting could be found for her.

One night while they were studying the word together, the doorbell rang. It was another friend, Rachel, who wanted to visit. Since she came in the middle of the study, Melodie and her teachers explained the situation, and she agreed to stay for the study. Some weeks passed as Melodie, Rachel and the teachers carefully studied the word together. Soon, however, Rachel spread the word to some of her trusted friends and they started coming.

Fiona, a childhood friend of Rachel, asked to join the group. Initially the teachers had some reservations – was she sincere? Or was she just trying to make use of the time for English practice? She turned out to be an earnest seeker of God and it was a blessing to have her in the group.

Then Fiona asked if she could bring her twin sister, Jessica, and Jessica's boyfriend Tyson. After some months of study, Fiona accepted Jesus. She also brought along her friend Angel, who told three of her room mates of what she knew about the Bible. They requested to join the group, and after ascertaining their sincerity, they too were welcomed into the group.

One day, Jessica asked how all the non-believers in the country could be reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ. God had put that burden in her heart and it was a heart-touching experience to see her so full of this desire to reach out to other people.

Tyson, meanwhile, brought his friend Francis, and Fiona brought another friend, Jenny, to the study.

The teachers write, "Seeds are being sown here and they are sprouting and growing and bearing fruits with his showers of blessing. We expect many more people to come to us since he is the God of much more!"





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A change in attitude

Fiona and Tyson wanted to marry, but Fiona's mother would not give her consent because, to her, Tyson was not good enough for her daughter. The house community Fiona and Tyson attended prayed with them about this matter. As the months went by, a slight change in attitude became evident. Then, one day, she decided to give her consent to the union.

Tyson also expressed his belief and thankfulness to God for all that he had done for them. He said, "God is so good. He is so much better than the god of our people [Buddha], because even after what he has done for us all we need to do is thank him in prayer. If it has been the Buddha, we would have had to go to the temple and offer him some gifts."





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Faith and maturity

Some thieves stole from Fiona and her mother as they walked home, taking Fiona's laptop computer. Some men riding motorbikes forcefully took the laptop which her mother was carrying, and sped off. Her mother was very upset and felt bad because the laptop was a gift from Tyson's family as a part of Fiona's dowry.

However, Fiona's faith and maturity was amazing. She said she had prayed for the thieves and believed that the robbery had taken place for a purpose. Her mother was very impressed with her attitude and her life.

Fiona's mother invited Fiona's teachers for a meal at their home, and also visited their home.

When Fiona and Tyson married in February, they acknowledged God as the enabler for this union.





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All that excitement for a dollar!

Chris and Geoff, learning language in Central Asia

A common way of getting garments mended in the city where Geoff and Chris live is to utilise one of the many women who earn their income by offering mending services on the main city centre streets. Such business enterprises are illegal, but very effective and help some people survive.

One day, Chris was having a hole in a pair of long pants darned when suddenly the women must have seen the police coming. All the women, without any warning, took off! The lady mending Chris' garment grabbed Chris' arm and hauled her down a set of stairs where they huddled together, hiding behind a pillar. There, the lady got on with the job. Chris felt for a moment as if she was being kidnapped!

It was a lot of excitement for a perfect invisible mend for \$1.





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Windows of opportunity

Michael and Marlene work with Global Interaction, and recently visited Central Asia, where they heard this story and met Jack.

Jack, a university student, was badly injured when his bike collided with a car. After being released from hospital, Jack returned home to recuperate. His English teacher, a Christian working with Global Interaction, had developed a good relationship with him previously and Jack's accident provided a further opening. When he returned to town to do his final exams, Jack visited his teacher and was given not only a Christmas card, but a pamphlet explaining the significance of the celebration.

The teacher is praying for more opportunities to talk to Jack.

There are many openings for teachers of English with Global Interaction. It is immensely rewarding to contribute to the growth of students in all aspects of their lives. If you are interested, see www.globalinteraction.org.au





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Christmas in China

Some Chinese Ph.D. students from prestigious universities in Beijing released a statement on the internet urging fellow Chinese citizens, especially young people, not to get too carried away with western lifestyle and their festivals, especially Christmas. Their main concern was the mindless copying and adoption of everything western by the young people without even knowing its meaning or implications. At this rate, they said, it would not be too long before western culture dominates everything in China. The petition went on to itemise those things which have become very popular in China these days: shopping centres, restaurants and hotels have decorated Christmas trees, Christmas messages flood the internet, newspapers, TV and radio programs, hundreds of millions of text messages are sent by cell phones, friends exchange Christmas greetings when they meet each other and people revel until very late on Christmas eve.

Many Chinese citizens spoke out against the petition, as many people celebrate the non-religious side of the festival with much excitement and fervour. Zou Hanru, a widely known columnist for the state-owned newspaper *China Daily*, wrote about this increasing popularity of Christmas and the people who try to steal it. He concluded in the most interesting way with the following:

I can understand the zeal of these people. They want to conserve our culture, and that definitely doesn't make them what we generally refer to as conservatives. They have a point. But they, or for that matter anybody else, cannot save any society from the influence of a world getting smaller by day. So instead of trying to shut our eyes and ears to western festivals, we should accept the goodness they offer and practise what they stand for. And let's not forget that Jesus was not born in the West but the East (the Middle East, to be precise), and he preached love for mankind and help for the poor.

One reason why Christmas has become so popular is that while the traditional festivals are a time to get together as families, Christmas is a time to spend on one's own pursuits and with one's own friends.

For believers, Chinese and expatriate, Christmas is a great opportunity to talk about Christ and what he brought. Many people have some ideas of Christmas (mostly of Santa Clause and its celebrations in western countries), but it is easy to go deeper into the true meaning of Christmas and why Jesus had to be born. One teacher writes, "The week before Christmas we could





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talk about Chinese festivals and festivals in other countries in the classroom. As we swapped the stories behind these festivals, it was amazing to see them listening to the true Christmas story for the first time. While I am against the commercialisation of Christmas, I am grateful for the way in which Father has opened an unlikely opportunity for us to tell of the true story through this seemingly ugly thing.”





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Another window opens

Michael and Marlene work with Global Interaction, and recently visited Central Asia.

On a recent overseas trip, Michael and Marlene met a Global Interaction team of teachers in Central Asia. Before leaving, they gave one of the teachers two spare copies of the New Testament to use where there was an opportunity.

Soon after returning to Australia, the visitors were excited to receive an email saying that the books had already been given to two of the students and that there had been further contact with others. Five students and a local teacher had been invited over for dinner; they'd had a wonderful time and said it felt like a home away from home! What harvest might result from the gift of those two books?





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Opportunity through grief

Hugh, a Chinese student, met an American man named Bob on the internet, and they communicated regularly for a year or so. Bob was a believer and often shared with Hugh about life and faith issues. A few days after Bob had sent a normal communication without any hint that he was unwell, Hugh learned from Bob's ex-girlfriend that Bob had died of a heart attack. Hugh was shocked and grieving, and called on some Indian friends whom he knew were believers. They invited him to visit and they talked about the meaning of life and how precious every moment of life is. Hugh raised many questions, and went away with some Bible tracts and a copy of a devotional book.



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New generation mission

Clive, in Central Asia

Clive met a lady who was managing an orphanage at the foot of the mountains eighty kilometres away from the city where he lives. The orphanage had been established by an overseas couple when they saw the need to accommodate orphaned children. Many of the children were physically disabled and at risk of being abandoned, the country not having the resources to assist people with physical setbacks. Supported by resources from their home country, the couple provided food, accommodation and education for the children, while sharing the good news of God's love.


When the couple retired and returned to their home country, financial support soon declined and the manager of the orphanage was instructed to seek local funding. How disappointing for the manager, a university graduate, who was seeking to maintain the orphanage for the sake of the children concerned.

Clive saw what was happening and it stirred him to think about appropriate principles to be followed by cross-cultural workers. It reaffirmed to him that one of the essential principles in such a project is that it needs to be sustainable through local resources and have the ability to generate adequate income.

Although the initial aims and objectives of many similar projects are humanitarian, there is no provision for continuity. Local people are unable to maintain many projects set up by cross-cultural workers. Clive does not see this approach as considerate or responsible, or a good witness for Jesus, who spoke of sitting down to estimate the cost before starting to build a tower.

A new approach can be taken by skills-based entrepreneurial social workers and mission staff. Many countries now only issue visas to people with business, trade or professional skills so that they contribute to the economy either financially or in skills training. The skills needed are diverse, and mission work cannot be kept separate from business and commerce. Local conditions must be known and understood if a ministry is to be sustainable long-term.

In Clive's view, modern mission requires the mindset of an astute CEO who is able to utilise resources and react to change while overcoming cultural and language hurdles and exercising personal skills. Does this sound like a tall order? Perhaps it is the challenge for the future.





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A surprising opportunity

Two believers from India were invited for dinner with Chinese friends at a fairly sophisticated restaurant. They talked and chatted about a wide range of topics when one of the men, Mr Chan, abruptly asked, “What is your faith?” The answer to his question brought out many interesting topics and the couple were grateful to God for making this wonderful dinner possible, and for the friendship and opportunities that it opened up. It was one of God’s special appointed moments. One of the Indian teachers wrote later, “I was reminded of the fact that it’s not about one’s effort and achievement, but it’s just a matter of being available for his service.”





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A teacher's privilege

L, teaching English in Central Asia

I teach English and I have found that our heavenly Father is a specialist in the business of turning blunders around! During the first week of classes, a young Christian, Carol, made herself known to me. She asked me to help another Christian friend in a different class, as she was struggling in life. Carol mentioned two students whom she had befriended. Later, when correcting assignments, I came across one of the names, Susie. I quickly wrote a message of encouragement on a hand-made card, with some Bible verses, and included it with her homework.

A few days later, Carol told me that her friend was coming to see me. When Paula, the lass, appeared, I realised it was a different friend – I'd written the card to the wrong person!

So what about Susie? She approached me after a lesson and explained how puzzled she had been to receive the card. She had called her mother in a distant province to read the message, and ask, "Why was I the only person to receive a card, and however did my teacher know that I was so homesick, so miserable, so lonely?" Her mother had replied, "She must love you."

Then Susie asked me directly, "Why did you write me that card?" My only words were, "My Father above must have known that you needed encouraging and comforting."

During the holidays, Susie and two friends came to visit. While I was preparing lunch, she came into the kitchen and said, "I'm not sure I'll be able to eat this food. You see, I'm a Muslim." I quickly reassured her that I never eat the forbidden meat or allow it in my home, and she responded with a warm hug. We held hands before the meal and I prayed for each girl, praising our Father for his love for these young women. Not knowing at the beginning that Susie was a Muslim, I think now that the Holy Spirit chose to reassure her through the message on my card. Nowadays after class, she bounces up to me for a private chat, "cousin to cousin", and I praise our Master that he has asked me to be his servant in this place.





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Walking in faith

L, teaching English in Central Asia

One of my class members, a believer, discovered just four days before her final exam that she was a diabetic. Reacting in shock, she would not see anyone or attend her last lesson. Some of her fellow-believers decided to fast and pray about the situation. I wrote her a card encouraging her to remain positive and trust our Father. Others prayed also. A few days later she emerged triumphantly, saying, "My Father has given me a gift and he wants me to use it for him." How humbling it is to see these young followers walking in faith!





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TIC!

Rema and Beii, teaching English in China

You recall the day when you made a fool of yourself in the bus on the way to the northern part of the city where you work. There you are, on the bus, all alone, surrounded by total strangers, none of them speaking a language you can understand. As the bus starts to move, the driver shouts something in that foreign tongue and you have no idea of what is going on. Then people stare at you. You panic, and look around. Through the driver's gesture you get the cue that something is not quite right. But no-one comes to your rescue and explains what is going on.

Somehow, as you stand there among all those strangers, you realise that you dropped a 10 Renminbi note in the slot when the actual fare was only 1 Renminbi. So this was what the driver was trying to tell you. He gestured that you should wait for new passengers to get on the bus and collect the change from them.

Embarrassed, you stand by the door, collecting the fares until you have the right amount. You think the whole thing is funny and want to laugh at yourself for your stupid mistake, but there is no-one around to laugh with you, so you restrain yourself. You never dreamed of becoming a bus conductor in your whole life, but here you are, collecting money from the bemused strangers who seem to be restraining themselves from laughing at you, probably because they don't want you to lose face.

There is a smile on your face as you fall asleep in the wee hours of the morning. You realise that anything can happen to you in this land. TIC! (This is China!)





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What would you do? What would you say?

L, teaching English in Central Asia

I met John when alighting from a bus one day. Although he's not a believer, he started attending my Saturday night group. One evening he told how he had found \$40 when walking to class. Thinking how lucky he was, he pocketed it. But, realising that someone had lost it and he was not the rightful owner, he decided to give it away in small amounts to any beggar or person in need. After a few days he had distributed \$10, when, on a crowded bus, his own wallet was stolen, containing \$30 of his own money, the same amount as the remainder of his windfall!

He reckoned that, having been robbed, he was in as much need as any beggar. But as he walked home minus his own money, he remembered his decision to give away the money he'd found, and he continued to give it to others.

As I thought about this, I asked myself, "What advice would you give this young student? Would you suggest that perhaps our Father had provided him with the exact amount of money as had been stolen from him? Or would you affirm his action in giving it away?"

Knowing that he would never accept money from me, I found a moment when his jacket was hanging on a peg with some other coats, and tucked exactly the same amount into his pocket. A few weeks later when he came to dinner, he told how he'd been wearing the jacket, reached into the inside pocket and found the money. Utterly amazed, he thought, "Perhaps I hadn't put that money into my wallet after all!"





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Thought provoking

L, teaching English in Central Asia

Fanny is a young student in my oral English class and just recently I discovered that she too is a believer. She sent me an email, thanking me for the Christmas lesson I'd taken. In her message, Fanny said, "I know you are so busy and have so many people who need your help, so many people with whom you share your life. I'm not asking for much – just a little love. Just a little will keep me strong and I'll know I'm in your heart."

My immediate response was a prayer to my Master: "You always looked with compassion on those around you. Please keep me from sending out messages that I'm too busy or that I already have too many people for whom to care."





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Valuable help on the home front

L, teaching English in Central Asia

On occasion, some of my students spend time in Australia to study. When I have contacted Christian friends at home to ask for their help, they have warmly welcomed these visitors and befriended them. One such student was Christine, and my Aussie friends not only met her at the airport, but helped her find accommodation with believers. They invited Christine to join their home group and helped her to meet other students living away from home.

I can see that the “ground crew” of encouragers, pray-ers and befrienders are vital to the work done out here. Without their willingness to “pick up the slack”, workers out here are limited and largely without impact in the ongoing role of pastoral care and prayer support.





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When family cultures clash

D and S, teaching English in Central Asia

Sandra married on the 26th November because she had been told it was a fortuitous day for a marriage. So instead of waiting for the Spring Festival to return to her home village for the wedding, she and her new husband were married in town with only a few friends present.

Less than a year later, their daughter was born. Sandra returned to her home village for the birth and remained there for six months with baby Joy. She then left the baby with her parents and returned to her teaching job. Sandra and her husband worked in different cities and only met one day a fortnight. After six months Sandra found she could not cope with the separation from little Joy, and went back to her home village.

Her husband did not agree with this arrangement. He was a typical village boy, even though he had been college educated and had a good job in the city. His parents did not have work in the village and constantly asked their son for money.

Sandra on the other hand was a modern city girl, college educated and working in a teaching job in the city. Her parents were diligent and hardworking, never asking for money from the young people.

Sandra wants her ideas and opinions to be considered, rather than being dictated to by her husband's parents. Resentful of her husband's attitude, she now says, "I just want to say words to hurt him, as he has hurt me so deeply. I am so angry." We try to point her to the One who can make a difference in her life and marriage, but she doesn't seem to hear.





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Is there anyone who can help?

D and S, teaching English in Central Asia

Emma has great concern for her family. Her older brother has left home, and no-one knows where he is living. He and his wife have lost two children, one in childbirth and one at 12 months of age after a long illness. They adopted a little girl a year ago. Emma's parents have been the main child carers and Emma feels angry watching them becoming more weary. The daughter-in-law lives with the family but does not seem to do very much.

Emma has bouts of depression, concerned not only for her family but having to cope with difficult people at work. She has been reading from the book of Luke, but finds it difficult to reconcile what she reads with all that she has been taught from childhood. She is confused.





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Battle for the minds of students

D and S, teaching English in Central Asia

There are two politics teachers at a nearby university. One has recently chosen to follow Jesus, the other to follow Islam. Another believing teacher at that university was allocated a Bible subject to teach, but has now been told it is cancelled.





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Opportunities to answer

D and S, teaching English in Central Asia

Michelle is from a minority racial group and her family follows the teachings of Islam. During the summer holiday break, we spent a week with in her village home. Because she is studying in the city, she comes to visit us periodically, staying overnight. She declines to stay longer owing to the food constraints of her religion. We are careful not to have pork, bacon or ham in the apartment and she usually eats heartily. Recently she said she would like to know more about Jesus and his teaching.

While there are firm restrictions on initiating the sharing of the gospel, no laws prevent us from answering questions!





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A complicated but hopeful journey toward God

D and S, teaching English in Central Asia

Holly became a believer last year, and visited us each week to ask questions and be guided in reading. She is a bright young girl who dropped out of school because she had no interest in study. Her father had left them and home was not a happy place. But her cousin had told her about God. Holly had leadership potential and a bubbly personality. During a recent university break, she took a part-time job. Unfortunately she met a married man who made various promises to her. She knows the relationship is wrong but has not been able to shake off the attraction. She returned home to Inner Mangolia for the Spring Festival – perhaps her cousin may talk further to her about their heavenly Father.





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Opportunities to nurture

Elsie has two older sisters and an older brother. She was the fourth child and she knows that her parents wanted another boy. Feeling unwanted, she left her home at age 15 and went to the city to train to be a nurse. Enrolling in the university, she became a believer.

Each week she comes to a Bible discussion group, and asks such questions as, “How can I forgive those who wrong me?” (She is thinking particularly of her mother.) “Is it OK to go out with a boy I have just met, even though he isn’t a believer?”

What a privilege to nurture such young people!





PREPARING TO SERVE

Journey > Destination

Sharlee Young, preparing for service in Asia

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.*

This is the song that ministered deeply into my spirit in a valley of my journey over the last 18 months. Deputation is not simply partnership development or support raising, but a spiritual journey, which demands faith, patience, perseverance and grace. Again and again, I turn my eyes to Jesus – the one who called me in the first place. Again and again, I kneel down before him and seek his face and will – the one who makes and keeps promises. Without fail, his glorious face shines upon me, he bestows his grace on me. Yes, I have been kept low on my knees, but my faith in him has never grown so strong, and his call to me has never been so clear before. Isn't it strange?! Just like the sea waves, the harder it hits the rock, the louder the sound is.

Journey is more important than the destination

Often, we think of the destination rather than the journey - when I can get there and what I will be doing there. Yet the process that defines who we are plays a more important role in our spiritual formation. In a performance driven society, we tend to find our acceptance and identity by measuring outcome. However, conversely, the Scripture teaches us that we are totally accepted by God, and through acceptance we find our kingdom identity and so then we can perform in his service. John 11 records that when Jesus came to the village where many were mourning the death of Lazarus, he did not say: "shut up, don't be so emotional!" or "just get over it, watch what I can do!" No, the text beautifully describes "he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled" (v33), "Jesus wept" (v35), and "Jesus, once more deeply moved..." (v38). Jesus walks the journey with people by accepting and identifying with them, because he knows that in building their faith and trust, the process is more important than the outcome. Who they are is more important than what they do. We learn to trust God deeply, because in our darkest hour Jesus is beside us.

Discoveries in the journey – pearls in the sand

There are many treasures to be discovered in the journey. Surprises from God are like pearls hidden in the sand. During a holiday in Queensland, a





friend with whom I stayed invited me to their church which gave me two minutes to share about mission. The church turns out to be one of my supporters. More interestingly, a lady after the service came and asked me whether I would go to a place to meet her friend. It happened that I was struggling to find my way to that place. She not only picked me up and introduced me to her friend but both of them have now also become my supporters.

Often a letter of encouragement and prayer lifts up my spirit to persevere. A twenty dollar note from an old lady in a retirement village reminds me of Jesus' comments of the poor widow giving up all she has in the temple. A friend's offering to coach me on support raising shows me God's ever supply. It is his grace that carries me through.

Often one speaking engagement leads to another. A friend will link me with another friend. A pastor happened to hear my presentation to a group of people. He came up to me and invited me to speak in their church. It has happened a number of times. The door slowly opens, with lots of prayers. I trust my God who seems to take a long time, but then suddenly shows up.

Walking the journey together

Where do I find God – if it is not from the human faces of God? I am forever grateful that in my desert experience I am accompanied by the great spiritual mentors who have walked alongside with me. They have never judged me (even my struggles), instead, always listened, accepted and believed in me. Their friendship, encouragement, prayers and guidance have helped me to keep pressing on in the Lord. The mission of God is never done by individuals, but an army of God's people together in mutual care and support.

When do you leave?

Not to avoid the question, or give a simple answer such as “when I raise my support”, I have an image of a caterpillar struggling and growing in the cocoon. It will turn to a butterfly and fly with its wings in the right timing.

“...We know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” (Rom 5: 3-4). May it become our encouragement in our journey together!

