



MISSION TO
Unreached Peoples

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The Unreached Peoples' ADVOCATE

NEWS ON GLOBAL EFFORTS TO REACH THE LEAST REACHED



Published by Mission to Unreached Peoples (MUP)

March 2005

Vol. 8, No. 1

Reflections On China

by Keith Hook

*In early November of last year I had the privilege of attending the China Challenge Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, after which my wife and I spent two weeks in China and Hong Kong, where we used to live. About 500 people gathered from around the U.S. and other parts of the world to listen, learn, and share about ministry in China. It was a marvelous time to connect and network with others, and to learn of new opportunities to reach the 1.3 billion people of that land. God has been doing a great work in spite of the 'wall' of resistance from the government over the years. Let me first share with you some facts regarding China and then follow on page three with some reflections on China by Dwight Gibson in **China 20/20**, a journal I became aware of at the conference.*



The Unreached Peoples' ADVOCATE

A Newsletter of Mission to Unreached Peoples

News on Global Efforts to Reach the Least Reached

Director's View



China
Perspective

David Hupp,
U.S. Director

China has grabbed the attention of Mission to Unreached Peoples from the very beginning years of our ministry. No, we can't compare ourselves with OMF/China Inland Mission and a handful of other organizations with sometimes 100's of years invested in the "Central Kingdom". But Mission to Unreached Peoples has been involved since the very beginning days of the reopening of China to foreigners in the early 1980's. Today China remains our largest field of service, with over 40 adults presently serving with us in China.

As is the broad picture of MUP worldwide, our workers in China are involved in a wide-range of ministry activities. Teaching English, either at private language centers or government schools, continues to be a wide open door for effective ministry. Others are involved in orphan ministry, focus on minority and unreached people groups, medical care and training, agricultural work, business platforms, outreach to businessmen and professionals, social outreaches,

and more. We have increasingly been able to connect with minority groups and are seeing the church established and strengthened in previously unreached areas. PTL for what He is doing in China, for the doors that remain open, and for the opportunity for you and me to be part of one of the greatest stories in the history of the Church.

Let me ask us all a question - what are we investing in this precious land and people? All of us do have something to give. We ask that all of you pray for China and hopefully specifically for a MUP worker or project. We thank you for your financial contribution to this outreach and communicate that there are cutting-edge opportunities to make a difference with missionary support and various projects including support needed for a network of Chinese Christians caring for 100's of orphans - and seeing churches planted as a result. And we invite you to consider serving yourself in China for a year or more - or start with a short-term outreach. YES, the exciting news is that there is a place and a need for almost anyone willing to go and serve. We'd love to help you connect personally in some way!

- China has 1.3 billion people in an area about the size of the U.S., but 80% of those people live in the eastern 1/3 of the country.
- It is estimated that about 90 million people use the internet in China.
- 20% of the world's cell phones are in China, with reception often better than the U.S.
- Massive urbanization is taking place with many brand new cities in the planning stages.
- 200 cities the size of Seattle have no church.
- The size of the church is estimated at 80-90 million people.
- Materialism is rapidly growing. The Wall Street Journal noted that during 2003 over \$36 billion was spent on home furnishings in China.
- China will host the 2008 Olympic games in Beijing and the 2010 World Exposition in Shanghai.
- The Chinese church has identified **training as the greatest need** that they have. **Christian literature is number two.**
- There is an abundance of ministry opportunities all over China.

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THIS ISSUE

Something to Think About:

"If you want to walk on water, you've got to get out of the boat."

John Ortberg

This is the title of a book by John Ortberg which you are highly encouraged to purchase and read. It is also available in audio format. Most of us want to grow in our walk with the Lord, but forget that it usually takes getting out of our comfort zones, our boats, if we really want to watch God work on our behalf.

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Mission INSIGHTS

Persecution in Perspective

The following is taken from a "Perspectives" column written by David Wang in the Nov/Dec 2004 edition of Asian Report regarding George Chen, a house church pastor in China, who had been imprisoned for 18 years. In a recent conference in Japan, Pastor Chen shared an interesting perspective on persecution. Reprinted by permission. Copyright © 2004 Asian Outreach International.

Pastor George Chen is now 70 years old. Still he is my closest, and best China co-worker. For 18 years George was imprisoned in China for his faith and evangelistic ministries. **He was assigned to work in the cesspool of the labor camp. To the prisoners, that was the worst punishment. To him, it was the best.** The conditions of the area were so repulsive that George Chen was left all alone. Thus, he was able to recite the Scriptures he had memorized and to sing his favorite hymns at the top of his lungs.

At the 1989 Lausanne II International Congress on World Evangelism, Pastor Chen shared his testimony and sang his most favorite hymn, "In the Garden." The delegates erupted into a standing ovation. Spontaneously they sang along with him, and praised the Lord loudly. It was the spiritual highlight of Lausanne II.

Recently, at the 4th World Missions Conference in Japan, George Chen shared his perspectives on persecution. First of all, he stated that he found the Church in the free world's concentration on China's persecution a "lopsided, inquisitive, and unhealthy addiction."

"I am constantly being asked about persecution in China. If anything, that is the work of the enemy. Let's first and foremost get back to what God is doing." Pastor Chen appealed. "God has been doing great things in China for the last 50 years.!"

Then he presented his personal observations on persecution.

1. It was not necessarily all directed towards Christians. People of other faiths, or no faith at all, were also put through great suffering and inhuman treatment. It was just "communism in practice."

2. There were persecutions specifically targeted against Christians, motivated by ideological and political purging. Quite a few of the unheavals against Christians, however, were internal power struggles of the Church itself.

3. Violence during the Cultural Revolution was rampant amongst the whole population, between all people. **Christian workers and leaders who were serving sentences in prisons were actually protected from the Red Guards running amok.**

4. To the true servants of Jesus, who went through persecution, they would, by and large, consider these experiences as their "Bible Schooling." They count it as a privilege, a blessing "to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings. (Phil 3:10)

5. Some persecution was caused by Christians themselves, insensitive to the Lord's teaching on being as wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

6. Persecution in China has driven the Church into much closer relations with Jesus. It also adds a sense of urgency to the Great Commission.

Generally speaking, persecution towards Christians in China is becoming less common. Some incidents of personal knowledge were local, low-level officials trying to extort extra income from believers.

8. **The outside world often sensationalizes persecution.** Pastor Chen is a firm believer of Habakkuk 1. Whereas sometimes we keep shouting to God, "Injustice! Violence! Lawlessness!" **God actually would like us to "Look at the nations and watch - and be utterly amazed. For I am doing something great!"**

cont. from page 1 (summarized thoughts of Dwight Gibson)

Ten years ago I sat in a Chinese restaurant in the suburbs of Chicago. I was talking with a man from China who closely monitors the social, political, and religious situation in China. He was Chinese by birth and still lives in China. I asked him a question, "How do you see China now, compared to the rest of its long history? I will never forget his words. He said, 'China has a long history. But in spite of its history, there is now more change in the future for both the church and for the nation than has ever been seen before.' ... I've never forgotten those words, and they returned to me while reflecting on the China Challenge event in Atlanta. I realized that there are issues in China today that are truly new. We are witnessing the rebirth of a great society that is now facing all the issues of the modern age in a number of categories.

The Unreached ADVOCATE

www.mup.org/AdvocateMain.htm

March 1, 2005 / Vol. 8, No. 1

a newsletter on activities of
 Mission to Unreached Peoples and other
 mission efforts published by:

Mission to Unreached Peoples

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Mission to Unreached Peoples (MUP) is an interdenominational agency helping people fulfill God's call in evangelism and church planting; often through holistic, creative strategies such as tentmaking and community development.

We would like to hear from you. If you desire more information about MUP or any articles, please contact the editor at the address above.

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SUBSCRIPTION: Printed copy is free upon request. The Advocate is also available electronically at the web address above. Let us know at mupinfo@mup.org and we'll send you a reminder as each issue is published or we can send it to you as a pdf attachment.

MUP is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization. Tax-deductible donations to the general fund, designated missionaries, and projects are greatly appreciated and can be sent to: Mission to Unreached Peoples P.O. Box 30947, Seattle, WA 98113-0947.

Our Mission

Our mission is to obey the Great Commission of Jesus Christ by investing our lives, gifts, resources, and vocational skills in God's work throughout Asia and Europe.



Chinese Church

There are increased social and political pressures being exerted on house churches, as well as increased freedoms which have allowed Christians to minister to children or to meet social needs. And with China's size and the varied experiences of those doing ministry in China, it reminded me of the old story about the blind men touching an elephant. Each one had a different interpretation of what he felt, based on differing perspectives. The same is true with the church in China. Everything and anything we've heard about the Chinese church seems to be true somewhere in China.

New Realities in China

Returning Chinese scholars who have studied abroad are bringing back another way of thinking. There are now internal immigration issues in China in light of the massive movement of its population from rural village, peasant life to the cities.

As the participants at the conference in Atlanta thought about changes they have seen since the beginning of their ministry in China, there was also a realization that while nothing has changed much, everything has changed in another way. The noticeable changes have to do with new freedoms because of political maturation and the sophistication of Chinese society as it modernizes. People recognize there is structured influence from the Communist Party, but that influence is less for the average Chinese citizen than it once was.

Other changes include easier access to visas and international travel, and the construction boom in China's cities with old neighborhoods being torn down and modern skyscrapers being built in their place. The rice paddies of ten years ago are the business districts of today.

But the changes are not just outward. People are turning from communal thinking to more extreme kinds of individuality. At the same time, a decline in morality among all classes of people has resulted in increased sexual promis-

"China has a long history. But in spite of its history, there is now more change in the future for both the church and for the nation than has ever been seen before."

cuity and increases in crime. Minds are changing along with the size of peoples' wallets, and the changes are not always benign.

There are great hopes and dreams for China. Followers of Jesus Christ have great opportunities to do things that are redemptive, but at the same time we need to realize that we are all humble servants seeking to identify what can be done for HIS glory, and not our own. We don't do ministry to build up a great nation, nor an organization that will be listed in the annals of history. We don't even do it for ourselves. We do it for God's kingdom - a simple, yet elusive task.

To accomplish that in China takes the long view, not the short view. It takes patience, not quickness. And it takes relationships nurtured over time. This current season is opportune. May we be faithful servants in this season.

Dwight Gibson is a founding and current board member of China Source. He is the senior Vice President with Geneva Global, based in Wayne, Pennsylvania.

Prayer and General Fund Response Form

Please send in the following form or respond by email to: mupinfo@mup.org

I pledge to pray for Mission to Unreached Peoples ministry ___ times per week, and/or for this specific Missionary or People Group/Project: _____.

Please count on me as part of the \$5000 in new general fund monthly pledges beginning _____ in the amount of \$ _____ /month for a minimum of one year.

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