

Proceeding from China to Jerusalem

Missions Conference 2006

By Patrick Higgins

Higgins:

To some of you guys to participate a little bit, because really what we want to talk about is what the whole conference is about. Just the triumphal entry or what's the word I'm looking for... Per session. Thank you. Oftentimes I'm thinking in Slovak and not in English, so you have to forgive me. I'm jet lagging a little bit. I came in on Tuesday night.

Anyways, I think God's doing some exciting things in China, and some of you have been there. So some of you know, those of you who have been to China or know something about China, how would you describe China? Some adjectives. Anyone?

Speaker 1:

Communists.

Higgins:

Okay.

Speaker 1:

Government only.

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Higgins:

Communist and government only. Okay. Any others?

Speaker 2:

I can describe it in one sentence or a paragraph. [inaudible 00:00:52]

Higgins:

That's true. Okay. Choose one. Anyone? Okay. Persecution. So you're talking about religious persecution. Right? Okay. There's more China than religious persecution, though, right? Okay.

How else could we describe of China? Mr. Tinjin?

Speaker 3:

They always have a lot of guards everywhere watching.

Higgins:

Okay, so controlling, maybe protective. What else? What about geography?

Speaker 4:

Populated.

Higgins:

Okay. So dense. Okay. What else?

Speaker 4:

There are also a lot of rural areas that are unpopulated.

Higgins:

Okay. Wow. Yeah. China is complex. Right. I was speaking with someone earlier today, and we're talking about the Back to Jerusalem movement and how some people say it's one way and some people say it's another way, and actually it's both. And that's what China a lot of times it's this contradictory place. When I went there, I put three words that I would describe. First one is daunting. It's just huge. Right. If you've ever been there, if you would like to go there, the country is just big. It's got mountains, it's got forests, it's got deserts, it's got tons and tons of people. Obviously, it's got a history that outlives ours for many centuries. How many people live in China? Any guesses?

Speaker 5:

Anywhere between 1 billion and 1 fifth of the world's population, which at 6 billion would come out. [inaudible 00:02:44]

Higgins:

Okay. A lot of people, right. Do we have really any conception of what a billion and a half is? It's like a big number, right? Yeah. I don't really have a conception. If it was in dollar bills, I don't know how much it would fill this room up. Someone told me like this if you would click your fingers and that represents one person, you have to be doing that for, like, 44 years, 24

hours a day for 44 years. That would equal how many people are there? Tons and tons of people. Yet at the same time, there's rural areas. It's a diverse.

When I was there, I was really surprised that China doesn't just have Chinese or what I would think of as Chinese. Right. There's also the Uyghurs, which has been a people group that was mentioned this morning. Right. What's the main speaker's name?

Speaker 6:

Paul [inaudible 00:03:39]

Higgins:

someone should know this. Right? Okay. Anyways, he mentioned the Uyghurs this morning when he was talking about communion service. They're a large group of people that live well, they live in the northwest section of the country, and they are connected to Kazakhstan. They're Muslim people. I was there in that area, and I was surprised to see tons and tons of mosques everywhere.

If you would check out the Chinese money, it's got five different languages on it. They have diverse ideas. Diverse. They have big ideas. Right. They're also very determined people. Right. Great Wall China. That takes a little determination to make that, right. It's not like building a strip mall or something like that. They're very determined. Economics, right. You probably shouldn't know about that. Doing business. Recently, China's last few years have expanded greatly into Latin America, Africa for oil, things like this.

Also, as far as faith goes, as far as Christianity goes, they have a lot of big ideas. They're very determined, very committed. That's how I see China.

What I like about what's going on in China is that a lot connected with what the speakers were saying earlier today is that when I was there, I just saw that God is doing something. And that was attractive for me. And that's why I went back a second time because it was interesting to see what God is doing. That there's a people that are although it's a big country and they're determined and they have a lot of possibilities and potential, that God is doing something amazing there. And it's fun to be a part of what God is doing. What do you think our part would be as people from the outside? What could our part be? What God you doing there? Any guesses? It all depends.

Speaker 7:

It all depends on who you are as being there. As a missionary, you could be somebody who brings in medicine. Well, not so much anymore. About translation and come in to help encourage people there because people there undergo rigorous persecutions and most major churches that survive underground.

Higgins:

Okay. Who has come as a missionary to China before? Who's visited specifically for evangelistic reasons or Christian reasons? What were you guys doing there when you were there?

Speaker 8:

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Planting churches.

Higgins:

You planned churches? How long were you there for?

Speaker 8:

Two years.

Higgins:

Two years? Okay, great. Was it a good experience?

Speaker 8:

oh Yeah.

Higgins:

Okay. And what are they doing there?

Speaker 8:

Planting churches in many areas. Working with Uyghurs and other minority groups. When we were going in, they had 12,00 cattle ranches in China.

Higgins:

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Really? (laughs). Now, when you say church planting, is that nationals are church planting, or these foreigners are doing this or both partners.

Speaker 8:

Partnered with locals. And we hardly attended a church that we were planting. Discipleship roles. And one of our missionaries was working with Tibetan buddhists. Or ex-Buddhists I should say. They are now believers, and they are now planting churches and attending the church services.

Higgins:

Some direct contact, a lot of supporting. Right. Is that the same story for you as well?

Speaker 7:

Yeah. Alot of the evangelism is [inaudible 00:08:14] Okay. Anyone else?

Speaker 9:

I taught there

Higgins:

Yes, you taught there? Okay. What did you teach?

Speaker 9:

Kindergarten.

Higgins: Kindergarten, okay, good. Starting with how long were you there?

Higgins: One year. One year? Where at?

Speaker 9: Harvey. Harvey? Where is that at? What section?

Higgins:

Okay, great.

You can see even in this room that some of us have had some experiences that God is doing something there. I think, personally let's see. Hold on 1 second. What kind of convicted me before I went to China, there was some friends of ours who came to Slovakia and they were sharing about what was going on in China and some numbers really staggered me. And the numbers were that they were saying that in China there's 10 -15,000 to believers coming every day. And that's supposed to be a conservative estimate. Some people say 30, some people say more 30,000. That seems kind of a lot to me. Even 10,000 seems a lot to me. But can you imagine that, if that's true, 10,000 new believers. How many people go to Biola here? No, I mean, I know you guys go to what's the student population? I'm sorry.

Audience: 5000.

Higgins:

Okay, so imagine that tomorrow there's 10,000 new believers, twice the student population.

Tomorrow. What would you do with them? How would you take care of them?

And then the next day another 10,000, and the next day another 10,000, and the next day it just gets mind boggling. Right. That is something to celebrate, though, right? That is something to say. Wow, this is good. This guy is doing something. Yeah. Granted, China has a huge population and maybe 10,000 a day doesn't seem a lot in the total population of a billion and a half, but it's a lot.

Some of you guys know about Back to Jerusalem. I think there's a speaker who's going to speak about it around four or something today. Is that speaker in the room by any chance? No. Okay, good. Who knows what Back to Jerusalem is? Anyone someone still shaking his hand? Or is that just moving a pen? Okay. All right. Back to Jerusalem is a movement in China. Something has been going on since the 20s. Maybe even your parents were involved in it a little bit, possibly. Back to Jerusalem is something that's very interesting for me. It's a movement in China and it's cross denominational lines. It's pretty much what most common believers are holding to or most churches are holding to. And it's to take the Gospel from China and continue westward and basically to go into the 1040 window. To what's? Everything west of China, which is Kazakhstan, which is north. You have Iraq, you have all the Middle Eastern countries, you have India to take the Gospel all the way to Jerusalem.

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Can you imagine that in a country that's persecuted, where you can't openly have church that they want to send out missionaries, thousands and thousands of missionaries to go to the Muslim countries? How many missionaries are leaving your church to go to a Muslim country? Some guesses. Or how many people from this church or not this church's school are going to a Muslim country? I know some guys are going to Egypt. That's great.

Speaker 10:

I know how many people go into from my church to missionary schools at all. And that's zero.

Higgins:

Zero. Okay.

Speaker 10:

No missionaries whatsoever.

Higgins:

How many people do you guys know? Do any of you know anyone who's going to an Islamic country? One? Is it you?

Speaker 11:

Yeah.

Higgins:

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Okay, so you know someone, right? Just one person. Okay. Is this from your church?

Speaker 11:

A friend that is going to Chad?

Higgins:

Okay, so in Africa, right? Anyone else?

Speaker 12:

A friend of mine is on a team with one of his professors that and he just started to go to Oman.

Higgins:

Oman. Okay.

Speaker 13:

I am just thinking about it. [Inaudible 00:12:54]

Higgins:

Okay, anyone else thinking about it? Okay. What do you think is the most difficult part about going to the Islamic country for your friends? Any guesses?

Speaker 14:

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Islam is very violent religion, and they believe that anyone not of the Quran is infedel and deserves to be slaughtered. And so they slaughter them.

Higgins:

All right, so it's a difficult place to work right now. (laughs) You have some experience, don't you, in Islamic countries?

Speaker 14:

Yeah. Pioneers does.

Higgins:

You and also the guy in front of you. What would you say? What's the difficult part of working in Islamic countries?

Speaker 15:

Their religion is tied so deeply into their culture. We worked in Afghanistan, Iran, [inaudible 00:14:12] but I don't know how violent is we experience warm hospitality, but we received as a guest of a tremendous hospitality to put Americans to shame. They received and maintained. But to take a step out of Islam and Christianity is significantly difficult because it's a whole cultural thing. Also their religion came after ours. So while they revered Jesus as a prophet and holy person and even put Jesus higher than Muhammad in terms of the Quran, because in the Quran, Jesus speaks as a baby in the major term makes a prophecy. We don't necessarily embrace that. But Muhammad is the last prophet. He's the greatest prophet and so he has the last word from

God. So I think that's always the major challenges to convince someone that there can be someone who as a prophet that has the last word from God.

Higgins:

Okay, so our Chinese brothers and sisters have some difficulties, right? We know that area, whether it's Islamic or whether they're holding to Buddhism in Tibet or Southeast Asia, whether it's Hinduism in India, very strongholds of darkness. Very tough places to work, right? Yes.

Speaker 16:

Some of our creative action platforms that we're using in Muslim countries are also becoming a place where, where Christian congress [inaudible 00:15:40]

Higgins:

Kind of developing that Christian community that can support them in their faith, right. On all levels. Right. Put some food on the table. It's an important thing. Actually a lot of the Chinese that I've met who are planning on moving to the Middle East, what they're planning is not to go and buy a building and say here let's start a church. Obviously that wouldn't happen. It would get shut down quite quickly. A lot of them are going to go and start a Chinese restaurant. Right. Who doesn't like Chinese food, right? Even in Slovakia in our city, which is not a huge city, we've got a few Chinese restaurants with Chinese people working in them. And that's what they're going to do. Start restaurants. Those who business start factories, things like that, that can be platforms for working in those countries. And at the same time, very much like what you're saying support this Christian communities.

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What do you think we can do from Biola, from whatever missions organization you hear from, what can we do? What are some practical things we could do to get involved in what's going on in China from the west. Any guesses?

Speaker 17:

Equipment.

Higgins:

Equipment? Like what kind of equipment?

Speaker 17:

Planes. Radio, publications, and [inaudible 00:17:27] and supplies for people who are going into rural places.

Higgins:

Okay, so resources. You might have some problem getting planes and things like that into China. Maybe not. I don't know if you're good at it. Maybe. What do you think? What are some other ways? We had teachers, we've had church planters' resources.

Speaker 18:

Business.

Higgins:

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Okay. Business is a big thing. Chinese are good businessmen. Actually, my main contact in China is a businessman. In the back...

Speaker 19:

I was thinking there might be some ways American missionaries can I don't know [inaudible 00:18:31] network with Chinese missionaries and support their

Higgins:

Good. Yes.

Speaker 20:

I'm not sure about this. I think I may have read an article that the house churches don't like to take outside money. Have you heard about that?

Higgins:

Yeah, but go on a little bit. Because of, like, accountability or?

Speaker 20:

Maybe the government. I don't know. It is not part of the [inaudible 00:19:13]

Higgins:

In that sense. Yeah. If you would send money through wire transfer or something, that wouldn't be very good. I think in my personal experience, they accepted some money, but just hand to

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hand, not something official. But actually, in my experience, when they did receive money, it was pretty interesting. They prayed over that money, and they kind of consecrated that money of the Lord. There was a lot of accountability in accepting funds. So that was a really refreshing thing. Yes.

Speaker 21:

I would say building relationships.

Higgins:

I agree. But just for everyone else, how could they mess things?

Speaker 21:

[inaudible 00:20:32] In some cultures is a problem

Higgins:

Right. Like, a dependency. . Okay. Who here studies business? I know you do. Anyone else?

Okay, so this is a possibility for you to get involved. Who here studies teaching or English?

Possibly? One. Anyone else? A few of you? All right, maybe you guys could get involved, right?

Who studies art or design? Some art majors? God can use you, too. I studied art. You can even

use that. What else? What other majors do we have here? You're smiling. So the answer no no..

You

Speaker 22:

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nursing.

Higgins:

Okay. That's a no brainer. Right? You can be helpful there. Who studies science or something in the sciences? What do you study specifically?

Speaker 23:

Biology.

Higgins:

Biology. How might you use your biology in China?

Speaker 23:

[inaudible 00:21:42] agricultural

Higgins:

Okay. Yeah, actually, I was looking up some. Occasionally I look up jobs in other countries, and there's a lot of agricultural specialist jobs for foreigners in China right now. So something to consider. Yes.

Speaker 24:

My mentioning my friend, he's been nine years now in China universities. He's a lawyer in business for years, and now he's teaching international law and economics [inaudible 00:22:09].

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And they are translating into Madarin and Cantonese. And and his wife teaches English, and he teaches international law. [inaudible 00:22:21]

Higgins:

Right. Even lawyers. If you can use lawyers, he can use any of you guys. All right, I'm just bringing this out just to point that if you want to be involved in what God is doing, it really doesn't matter where you're coming from. It doesn't matter that you're from the west. You can still be involved there in China, and it really doesn't matter what you guys are studying as long as you're going to devote those things to the Lord.

When I was exposed to China or before I went to China and speaking with some friends who went there, the two things that we were challenged with, of how to get involved with we're bringing in Bibles and also bringing in instruction for potential pastors and evangelists and church workers. And so that's pretty much what we were challenged to do and we did so as a team from Slovakia. Anyone know where Slovakia is, by the way? It's not in China. It's not in Asia. Okay, you answer all the questions. So you're in the back.

Speaker 24:

so ten years ago it was part of Czechoslovakia.

Higgins:

Around twelve years ago. That's close enough. Okay. Yeah. It used to be Czechoslovakia. It's a small country in Central Europe. It has absolutely nothing to do with China at all, except that it

was a former Communist state as well. Slovakia is this place that actually it's kind of interesting. There's much fewer Christians in Slovakia than there are in China, both in numbers and in percentage wise. And it's pretty much the smallest economy in the European Union and a lot of people don't really have a vision for missions. There's very few Christians. Like in our city, it's 110,000 people. And we have about, let's say this be generous, 500 Christians. So it's a pretty small population. But even in our little group, we were challenged to make a difference and challenge to get involved in what was going on in China. We said, Okay, we're going to pray about it, we're going to do it, and we send a little team on over. And what I'm going to do is show you a little video. It was our introduction for some churches that we wanted to have them get involved with us. And if I can get this technical stuff to work.

So we're going to do two little videos, one now, one later. And this first one was just kind of explaining what we wanted to do as a team. Hopefully that gives you a little bit of taste for those of you who haven't been to China. We were challenged basically that China needs two things from the outside world, and obviously we spoke about more, but two things being Bibles and teachers. Think about the numbers. If tomorrow 10,000 new believers showed up here at Biola, could you have enough Bibles to give them? Do you have 10,000 Bibles laying around here at Biola? Is there enough Bibles at the bookstore, the Christian bookstores, to cover 10,000 people? What do you think, yes or no? No. Okay. And if there's another 10,000 the next day? In the next day? Okay. They do print Bibles in China, but they print about enough to last for one day. Okay. So obviously there's a need for Bibles. Who here reads their Bible on a daily basis or tries to? Okay. All right. I shouldn't put you on the spot here, but obviously do you get anything out of your Bibles? Yeah. Right.

It's important for your spiritual growth. Right. Can you imagine being a Christian not having a Bible and trying to grow properly? It might be a struggle. Obviously, Bibles are very important thing to bring in and that's actually, part of what we were doing is bringing in Bibles. We'll show another little video showing the ins and outs of that, bringing in Bibles. If you ever have a chance to do that, do it. I think everyone understands the situation there, that it's illegal to bring in Bibles and things like that, but there is a huge need. We've been working with an organization that essentially takes in orders from churches in China. So it's not just the Western church saying, okay, well, you guys need Bibles. But the Chinese are asking, Okay, we want Bibles. And specifically, we want this kind of Bible with somewhere with commentary, somewhere without some kind of you can say like a Thin Line type thing. They're putting in requests. And so it's coming from the Chinese church and this organization that I have a relationship with. They're just kind of like UPS, right? They're just the guys bringing it across the border and delivering it. And it's amazing. It's like being James Bond for Jesus. It's a lot of hard work. We cross the border a few times a day, like five or six times a day. It's very hot and humid going from Hong Kong to Xinjian, but it's an amazing experience, and you see God working, and that's the best part about it, the funnest part about it. So you see God working where you get through the border, and you probably shouldn't.

When I went, my wife and my little son Gabriel went. And my wife always tells a story how she was going across with Gabriel. And she has a stroller, and it's got a whole bunch of Bibles underneath it, and she's got some in a backpack and all this stuff she's going through, and the guards wanted to stop her, and my little son Gabriel, this blonde, blue eyed, little cute one and a half year old, just blows him a kiss, and instantly these guards who were women, their hearts

melted, right? And they said, Okay, and they passed right on through. My wife actually got more Bibles through than anyone else with little Gabriel. Yes.

Speaker 25:

[inaudible 00:29:47]

Higgins:

In my experience, that's how it works, that bring in Bibles. Now, it's a lot different than it was, let's say, during 20 years ago, something like that. It's contraband. If you're bringing it across, it's the same as if you were bringing alcohol or cigarettes or something else. It's not on the same level as bringing in drugs or nuclear warheads or something like that. How it works is that if you would get caught, because there were some people who did get caught, they would confiscate the materials you would go across, and they would leave you a little slip, and they would store whatever materials they had taken from you. And when you go back into Hong Kong, you can pick it up if you desire to. You pay a little fee for the storage, and then you can pack it back in your bag and go right through again. So that's what we do. If anyone got caught, you just fill up the suitcase again, hand it to another coworker and take it back across.

Small quantities, being like a suitcase full, like 100 Bibles, that is considered contraband. It's not something more serious than that. However, if you were we know of guys who obviously bringing in one suitcase, but after a week, that's a lot of Bibles, right? If you have a team of people doing there's a lot of Bibles. How we did in Hong Kong is we have a little office, and beginning of the week, this office was delivered tons of Bibles in boxes. So up to the ceiling in

boxes. By Friday, there's nothing there. So it was great because we can actually see the results, right? That's what for me and for our team was great. The goal was real clear. Take this from here to here, and at the end of the week, if you did it or didn't do it and where are we going with this?

But if you were to take in, for example, if you had all those Bibles that you brought across that week and you're loading them up onto this truck, that's going to ship them all over China. And this happened once where the PSB, which is kind of like the secret police or CIA kind of thing, KGB, something like that, they had actually caught them doing this. And the American guy was kicked out of the country forever and had a black mark in his passport. And the Chinese guys went to jail for at least minimum three years. Could be more.

In China, the enforcement or the punishment for certain crimes is different. If you're foreigner, oftentimes you're either slapped on the wrist or you're sent out. But it's the Chinese who are really the ones who are suffering when they get caught. And it could be three years, it could be a lot more. This guy that actually got caught, this American guy, he just changed his name and passport, and now he's still doing it. So he's doing the normal smuggling thing. But obviously there's a big need. The numbers are just huge of how many Bibles need to come in. And it is something that we in the west, we can do it when we were going across, we just dress up like businessmen. Businessmen are crossing the border all the time. No one's going to suspect it. And when you're doing it with the Lord, it's good. It's interesting. When you go across the border about five or six times a day and you do it for a few weeks, you start to recognize people on the border.

And there was other guys who were also bringing in stuff into China, but not Bibles, okay? Other smugglers. And it was funny. My wife and I, we met this Filipino guy who's smuggling in something with computer parts or something like this. And he went across the border maybe twice a day. And he had a little bag not much bigger than actually smaller than my backpack here. And he thought that was a lot of stuff he was bringing in. And I said to him, he had no idea what we were doing. I said, Yeah, you ever think about bringing a suitcase like this? He's like, Oh no, that's not possible. You could never do it. I was thinking, yeah, well we've just been doing it like five times a day because we're doing it for the Lord and God's taking care of it.

Another thing is training. All right, think of the numbers. 10,000 people. What's the seminary here? Talbot. Talbot. How many pastors come out of Talbot in a semester or a year? Just a guess.

Speaker 25:

About 150?

Higgins:

150? Does that sound right? Okay, that yearly output of 150 pastors, would that be enough for 10,000 people? New believers every day. What's that? That's a lot of people after a year, right? Most of the pastors that I met in China, a lot of them actually have other work that they do, businessmen or they're workers in some factory or something. And all of them are taking care of multiple churches. There's just simply not pastors or their wives are also pastoring multiple churches because in effect, there's just not enough leaders.

And you can imagine if there was 10,000 new people who said, hey, I'm a new believer and I want to get fed. How are you going to take care of them? I did the math this morning. I was at Starbucks at 06:00 in the morning. I was like, okay, what am I going to do? And I was thinking, okay, 10,000 people, let's say tomorrow what's your name? Reuben. 10,000 people come to you tomorrow and say, hey, we want you to be our pastor, Reuben. All right, now you got to remember, you don't have a facility that holds 10,000 people, right? You got to meet with them in groups of about 30 people at a time. And so let's say you have a normal worship service, about 2 hours. If you work 24 hours a day for a week, you'd only meet a quarter of your people, okay? You only meet about 2500 of those people. So you wouldn't even have enough time to actually meet all the people who'd be coming to you.

And by that week you've already got another 60,000 people saved. So the numbers are huge, guys. There's huge potential. Here I've noticed being back in Southern California, we're fat on Christianity in the sense that we have so many resources. As you notice in the tent there's all the different organizations that have resources just on the drive here, flipping through the channels, okay, here's a Christian station. Here's another Christian station. Here's another Christian station. You know, churches all over the place. We are so fat with information, so well equipped. We have a lot to give out. If you've been sitting in any decent Bible teaching church your whole life, or even part of your life, you have a lot of education already, okay? You don't have to go to the seminary. You have a lot of biblical education. You have something to give.

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There is a big need for training and for bringing in Bibles, and you guys can do it because we from Slovakia who don't have all this fatness. We don't have 100 radio stations, we don't have a lot of biblical resources. We're able to do it. Yes.

Speaker 26:

What does Biblical education currently look like in China?

Higgins:

I'll just share from my experience, because that's about as far as I'm going to go. They've set up Bible schools. They're usually connected with networks of Christians. I don't know if we want to call it a denomination. We could call it that, in a sense. How I've seen it in China. So they have these Bible schools, and they have multiple schools. There's about usually 30 students per school. And they would be, according to, in a sense, grades. You have one level and then a second level, third level. A lot of them are led by older students, essentially, who've gone through the courses, and then once they get to the last course, they start being teachers in the first school, most of the school, because it's illegal, they don't have a nice facility like you have here at Biola. Basically, they're meeting generally in villages or on the outskirts of towns. The buildings that I was in were generally they looked uninhabited. They were just beat up, looked like bombs went off on them or something. Just very primitive. And the whole thing is that they're trying to not attract any attention. Usually the students, in my experience, when they went to the school, they went and they didn't leave for four months. You brought your stuff and you went into a building, and you didn't leave this building for four months. I mean, that's quite a commitment to learn more about Jesus. For me, I would go crazy. Personally, I was stuck in the

building for ten days, and I was very fidgety, especially since there was no heating in these buildings and it was winter time. So very primitive situation because they have to keep it secret. Usually their instructors will go out and buy fruit, food and things that are needed because they don't have a lot of money. They don't have tuition like you have here at Biola. So that's kind of nice. But they don't have any money either. So usually it's very faith based, and the Lord just provides for their needs. Did that answer your question? Kind of. Okay, yeah.

Speaker 27:

This brings me to a question that I've been wondering about. How is the average Chinese believer in relation to the average American believer, are they more strong in the word? Less strong than the word?

Higgins:

I don't know if I can actually answer that question. Does anyone have an opinion on that? Who has experience. Yeah, it's probably quite similar to here. Well, in my experience, I've met guys that know the word wonderfully more than a lot of pastors I know, to be quite honest, and love the Word. Love God's Word. There's this guy James, who's become a friend of mine, Chinese pastor. And what I love about him is that he doesn't just have information about the Word, but he actually loves the writer of the Word. He loves Jesus, and he really believes what it says. And that, for me, is inspirational. I love to be around guys like that, I think because it probably runs the gamut. But at the same time, I could imagine that because there's not enough people to actually teach the Word, that with some people there is a lack of knowledge, but it's very hard to say. It's very hard to say.

Speaker 27:

Well, it sounds like with persecution, they have to endure more, and so they trust with God much more than we do.

Higgins:

In my general experience. That's true. Well, it comes down to this, that it actually costs to be a Christian in China. So if you are a Christian, you really are a Christian. We can be a Christian here, or we can claim to be a Christian here without actually being a Christian here, if that makes any sense, in those terms, yes. It seems like people are a little bit more committed.

How many of you guys actually know what you want to do when you get out of Biola? Raise your hand if you actually really know what you're going to do. Okay. Very few of you. All right. This is connected to the question. When I went to the school, generally, the students at the school were ranging from age 15 to 25. Very young people. All of them were very committed to being there. Obviously, if you have to lock yourself up in a place for four months that doesn't have heating in the wintertime and living in very primitive conditions, all of them, I would say not all of them, let's say 95% of them said very clearly they knew what their callings were. They knew that they were called to be pastors or evangelists or work in the church or be missionaries or work with children. They were accepting a calling that is very unpopular in China, that has no materialistic benefit for them whatsoever, if anything has serious negative consequences as far as persecution and going to jail. Most of the students that I met with in that age bracket had already been in jail.

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So I thought it was interesting as I was visiting here at Biola or other schools and asking people, say, what are you going to do when you get out? And no one seems to know. And I wonder why not?

Speaker 28:

We were talking about teaching. I was thinking if there was anything about cult?

Higgins:

I don't know a whole lot about it, but other than what you've already said, yeah, there is a lot of cults in China and a lot of them are pseudo Christian, so they have some connection with Christianity, but they're completely off base. One of them being Eastern lightning, which a lot of the Chinese people were making mention of that. And it's actually why some of these guys really want to learn more about the Bible, because they don't want to be deceived. Some of these cults are targeting Christians in China. So it's a real bad situation. It's kind of like that particular group functions partly like a religious group and partly like the Mafia, in a sense. There's kidnappings, there's extortion, a lot of weird stuff, but my information is very limited on that.

Speaker 28:

So the only thing you probably do is send Bibles and teaching?

Higgins:

Send Bibles, pray, teaching. Yeah. I always say, do what the locals are asking you. If they're asking for Bibles, bring Bibles. If they're asking for teachers, bring teachers. Don't impose

anything on them, right? They know what they need. And if they think that we can be helpful, then they're going to let us know. And those are the two ways that we were asked to be helpful in bringing in Bibles and in training.

Speaker 29:

[inaudible 00:45:11]

Higgins:

Because the nature of the thing is that the schools are illegal, so draw too much attention. Yeah. I mean, occasionally I would imagine that some of them leave, like, for example, one school we know that they didn't. And then another school, some of the girls would go out, like one at a time, usually in the evening or something like that, but very limited time outside the school because of not wanting to draw attention. One of the schools that we are in, it had been shut down. The government found out about it. All the students went to prison basically for a few weeks. They were actually let out because the government said, well, you're all 15 to 20. They thought you guys are just being deceived. It's kind of a slap on the hand. Go away. But the government confiscated the building, confiscated all their Bibles, confiscated everything. But what I love about that whole situation was the director of the school, who's an older gentleman, when he heard that his students had gone to jail, he went to the jail and said, put me in here, too. These are my students. And what I loved about that is that just a full on application of carrying each other's burdens, right? He didn't have to go in and turn himself in, but he wanted to be there because he wanted to be in the cell with his students because they had never been in jail before, and he had been in jail many times, and he wanted to just make sure that they were okay. He was

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going to be their teacher in all areas. And for me, that was just a great testimony of commitment and just loving one another. When they got out of jail, they just went and found another place and started all over again. And that's what they do whenever it gets shut down. They just find a new place and start over again. So they're very determined, and they very much know what God wants them to do.

Anyone interested in going to China in the future? Okay. What's stopping the rest of you?

Speaker 30:

There are other places in the world too. China is great but it's not the only place that needs help.

Higgins:

Exactly. Okay, so who does want to go? Can you raise your hands again? Any concrete or specific plans for going sometime soon?

Speaker 31:

I'm going to be there for two months this summer.

Higgins:

Two months this summer? Okay. What are you going to be doing while you're there?

Speaker 32:

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I will be personally be partnering with the leaders there and building friendships. [inaudible 00:47:51]

Higgins:

Okay, Is that in Shinzen? There was a booth out here. Not a booth, but a table out there selling some cookies or something like fundraising. Okay. One of the guys back here?

Speaker 33:

I will be going to Northern China.

Higgins:

Northern China, Okay. Yeah.

Speaker 33:

There are like Chinese people but no one is reaching them. [inaudible 00:48:33] This whole area is connected to Northern Korea in Northern China.

Higgins:

Right on. Do you have some contacts there?

Speaker 33:

Actually my father.

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Higgins:

Okay, good contact. There was another hand from over here.

Speaker 34:

I am actually going on the same trip.

Higgins:

same trip? Okay, good. Anyone else from over here going? You in the blue.

Speaker 35:

study abroad

Higgins:

What's that? Studying abroad? Great. Use your life as a witness. It's perfect. Right on. How much time do we have here? Because I don't want to keep you longer than you need to be.

Speaker 36:

Well in my watch it is almost 3:30.

Higgins:

What's that mean? That means we're done or we have more time.

Speaker 36:

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I don't know.

Higgins:

No one told me either what I'll do. If you guys want, we'll show the second video and then we'll call it quits. The reason I like to show the video is that for me, I'm a very visual person, so if I can see something, that kind of inspires me, and I hope to inspire you a little bit. The first one was kind of first video was a promo for our trip, and the second one is photos from our trip. We did, as we've already spoken about, took in Bibles, second thing, training in Bible schools and also mission school, which was in northwestern China. And you'll see some of that. It was in a Muslim area, and you have to forgive me. The video was actually not made for you, so it's a little bit heavy on the photos of my son.

Speaker 37:

Can I just a question real quick.

Higgins:

Of course.

Speaker 37:

Friend of my daughter has been in China for second year. She's a sports person with ABC,

Higgins:

ABC?

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Speaker 37:

ABC Television. She was in Italy covering the Olympics, but has gone to China as a sportswoman and working with sports people. We had a short term group from Baltimore come to Kyrgyzstan, which is very mountainous country, and they brought \$10,000 worth of mountaineering equipment and started mountaineering club in Kyrgyzstan. They donated the 10,000 worth of equipment, and gave mountaineering skills. So there are many, many ways of ministering there from the area of the sports okay.

Higgins:

For the PE majors, right. Actually, before we show the video, is there anyone else who has some opportunities for going to China that maybe you'd like to get some of your fellow students involved in? Anyone else? Okay. No one? All right. Yeah.

Speaker 38:

Can I just share something?

Higgins:

Yeah

Speaker 38:

Regarding the transporting of Bibles, do you guys know any Chinese that belongs to the government official or something? Any contacts with..anyone who's in the position

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Higgins:

and also in relationship to taking in Bibles, right?

Speaker 38:

Yeah, just to help you guys with that.

Higgins:

I don't know if the guys that I know, if they have that kind of contact there is well, I know recently a friend of mine, Neil Parola, who I've went with, some of their contacts have friends who are actually Christians, who are Communist leaders over certain regions there, but they're working in the Communist Party and they say it's very difficult, but it allows them to do certain things and help the believers in their area. So it's not really connected, maybe indirectly connected to Bibles. But.

Speaker 39:

I was just thinking that those kinds of people might help.

Higgins:

Yeah. You know, actually with the bringing In Bibles, the organization that we have contacted with, they have an interesting set up that they bring in the Bibles and they have a friend who is a logistics guy, he's a guy that's kind of like UPS. He's a delivery, he has a delivery company. He's not a believer, but he takes the whole policy of you just bring me whatever and I won't ask any

questions and I'll ship it wherever you want. So that's how it gets shipped around. So it's kind of using the local mail service to get things around. So the Lord provides these ways.

All right, thank you guys for hanging out, for sharing with one another. Maybe we could just pray real quick. We'll just end that way and then I'll let you guys go. Lord, thank you that you're doing amazing things throughout the world and trying to just being one of them, Lord, and that you are triumphant, Lord, that you are the best. We just thank you that you want us to be a part of what you're doing, Lord, and it's just, in my opinion, completely for our benefit, Lord, and just thank you for involving us, Lord, and wanting to be having us near You, Lord, and doing what you're doing. Lord, just put that in our hearts more and more to just seek after you. Lord, I ask that you would use each and every one of these guys here, Lord, to do what you want Lord to get into Your plans, Lord, and just revealed to them very clearly through the Holy Spirit what is their role, Lord, and Your big story and Your big plan, and that they just simply be obedient, Lord, and trusting you fully without reservation, Lord, and we just thank you. We want to lift up the church and China, Lord, and your people there, Lord, and we know that they're on the winning side, Lord, they're with You, Lord, that they're able to celebrate and be joyful and press on, Lord, even despite difficult times, because you're with them, Lord, and you said that you're surely with us to the very end of the age, Lord, that you have all power between heaven and earth, Lord, and we thank you that it is all under your control, lord. That you see the whole picture, lord, and you have everything worked out, lord. So we'd just want to be in agreement and get behind what you're doing in your name. Amen.