



“What Do You Think of Mohammed?”

On the spot: Sharing Jesus with Muslims

It was clearly a set-up. I'd been invited to the house of a neighbor for dinner. When I walked into his sitting-room, there were about 20 men from the local mosque, reclining on mattress-type cushions placed against the walls. The only spare seat was beside the bearded imam at the far end of the long room. I often listen to his fiery sermons broadcast through the public loudspeakers into our neighborhood. He motioned me to sit down beside him. He then gave a little sermon for me on the benefits of Islam and invited me to submit to Allah. Through stories, I explained how Christ had saved me and fulfilled all my needs.

“But what about Mohammed?” he asked. “We accept Christ as a prophet—why don't you accept Mohammed?”

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What a Way to Retire!

Since retiring in China at age 66, this couple has connected a steady stream of students and friends to Christ and nurtured them in their faith.

Back about 1984, “Andy” and I were invited to a dinner meeting of a women's circle in our home church in Rockford, Illinois. We sat at a table with one of the circle members and her lawyer husband. He was on the board of a Christian organization that sends English teachers to China, and had just returned from setting up an exchange program between a law school in the U.S. and one in China.

He knew we had retired from teaching, and during dinner, he said, “They need English teachers in China. Why don't you go over there and teach?”

That sounded very interesting, but at the time we couldn't consider it. Early in the 1980s we had lost \$89,000 on a spec house we built when interest rates went to 24%, so we had a huge debt. However, since it sounded like a good idea, we

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Our Singapore Adventure: 7½ Great Years

Introduction: We've always enjoyed befriending internationals. When our children were small, it was fun to invite international work colleagues into our home. Many became like uncles to our kids. These friendships and previous experiences in Asia, plus our interest in missions, spawned a dream to live overseas.

Since our early marriage, Jean and I have desired to serve God through my engineering. Although we have great admiration for traditional missionaries, we wanted to serve through a “tentmaking” mode. We were encouraged when a missions leader suggested that I get a Masters degree to make me more marketable overseas. I worked part-time on the degree for 3½ years, while being a full-time engineer (and raising 4 children). For ten years we

dreamed, prayed, and sought overseas openings mostly in Germany, but found nothing in my specialty—microchip design.

Then we heard about openings in Singapore. During a special weekend praying for God's leading, we decided to fly to Singapore to “scout out the land.” By contacting companies over the internet, we arranged nine interviews—seven with industry, and two with academia.

During that week (January, 1996), one school offered me a job teaching electronics. We accepted, and at 44 years old, moved with three teenagers in June. Our oldest daughter stayed to go to university.

How we thank God for this school. We were so eager to go, I might have taken almost any offer. But only that school made

a tangible offer—a real expatriate package including subsidized housing on campus, an educational allowance for our children, and a “bonus” at the end of each contract period. These benefits allowed us to focus on relationships, put our children in a small Christian school, and build savings.

Charming Singapore: Singapore is a lovely, modern city-nation-state on a small tropical island in SE Asia with 4.2 million people, primarily Chinese (75%), Malay (15%), and Tamil Indian (5%). Fortunately,
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Singapore shops along city street

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Singapore *from page 1,*

English is the public language. Though the culture has many Western touches, it has an Asian soul. The people are fascinating and precious, and almost always friendly if we are friendly.

Difficulties and Challenges: Certain climatic and cultural differences made life uncomfortable. It was very hot and humid. Sometimes, we sweated just sitting still. We learned to always carry an umbrella, since rain might surprise you any time. Adjusting to food and shopping took time. Fortunately, when we grew weary, it was soothing to eat something familiar at McDonald's. But we made it our aim to learn to eat and shop like the local people. Our whole family came to love many Indian, Chinese, and Malay dishes, but declined "strange" dishes like "pig organ soup!"

One of the most painful challenges was job-related. My first boss, a fellow expatriate, retired after a year, and a Singaporean woman took over. Thankfully, both of us are Christians. But over time, we developed low-level conflicts from an unusual work arrangement. We worked together on a research project with a small team of colleagues of which I was the leader (over my boss). But in all other matters, she was my leader. These conflicts came to a head one day during my official, annual performance review. In a gentle way, we both acknowledged the conflict and resulting pain. Amazingly, we paused and prayed, confessed, and asked for God's help. This created a wonderful turning point! From then on, we were able to work through issues in a courteous, non-threatening manner.

Our Ministry: Though we were eager to serve God, our "ministry plan" was vague. The great themes in Jesus' teaching—go, preach the gospel, and make disciples of all nations—were clear, but our plan wasn't.

Joining a Singaporean church was a good start. From that involvement and accountability, many good things happened. Also, joining a home group provided deeper relationships and mutual encouragement.


A major turning point came from an invitation by church friends to join a Mandarin-speaking Bible study for reaching mainland Chinese. "But we don't speak Mandarin!" we said. "No problem." Jean was asked to teach a children's Bible lesson, in English, in one apartment. I was asked to befriend some men in the adult Bible study, with a translator, in another. The leaders became our closest friends and co-workers, and a source of great joy.

After a year or so, a seeker from China became a believer and, with his wife, formed a fellowship in their home every Sunday. They asked us, as "older brother and sister" to join them as mentors. We saw wonderful changes in this couple's lives and in many of their friends in the years that followed. Their simple, whole-hearted pursuit of God in Bible study, prayer, and hospitality led to much spiritual growth and evangelism. We helped them discover how to follow God in a biblical, but Chinese way, not an American way. Our contributions were simple: being available, showing love, listening, and sharing our experiences. But adjusting to their time schedule was hard. They usually met Sunday afternoon for 4-6 hours (very un-American!). With time and surrender to God, we found this a blessing. We also learned to do things "outside the meeting," like meals in our home, trips to the beach, and attending Chinese festivals. We even learned to sing a few Chinese songs, much to their delight!

Leaving Singapore: By the end of six years, all of our children had left Singapore for universities in the U.S. We were "empty-nesters," geographically distant from our children and aging parents. Long before, Jean and I had to prayerfully face "When do we leave?" and "What comes after Singapore?" We had discovered that I seem more gifted as a teacher-engineer, and we really enjoyed working with Asians. Eventually, we felt led to have me pursue a PhD, so I could teach at the university level anywhere in the world.

After applying to several schools near Jean's parents, we received an offer from the University of British Columbia in June 2003. Feeling joy mixed with sorrow, we left Singapore in December and I began my PhD in January. We wrote a song "Farewell Singapore," to capture our experience. You can download it (mp3) at: http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~rfoist/rods_music

Benefits of our Adventure: Through our small step of faith to serve God, we gained precious new friends, neighbors, and colleagues. Our children received a valuable education. We all learned to be much more culturally sensitive. We broadened our perspective beyond a narrow, American one to include viewpoints of other cultures. But our greatest blessing is participating in God's great work through the good news of Jesus, leading seekers to Him, and building up His global Kingdom. This inspires us to continue as His "tentmakers," serving His Kingdom as long as we live—whether here or overseas.

—Rod & Jean Foist 



Doorways! Hot Job Opportunities

10,000s of Openings—Find One!!

Jobs are there by the 10,000s in all kinds of professions. More than once my heart has ached that Christian professionals were not ready to go when a unique need and opportunity crossed my desk, like a request from Russia for 100s of senior loan officers to help them develop their credit industry. You just have to look. Some professions like ESL have so many openings, you can't fail to find something. Others take much more work to find. But you only need one. The key is to search online for leads, companies, and contacts, to keep at it and then to network with everyone you can. For more help click on the "In depth SECTION" on the left nav bar at www.globalopp.org.

Malaysia – Business Training Consultant

Malaysia and neighboring countries have laws requiring companies to set aside money which can only be used to train their workers. You can develop your own consulting business to train workers in a number of industries so long as it makes sense that your training would benefit them and the company. We know a committed Malaysian Christian who wants to help prospective tentmakers set up such businesses (and even others) in Malaysia. Contact editor@globalopp.org for info.

Malaysia – IT Software Development

Malaysia offers government grants to develop desired software. Our partner in Malaysia will help prospective tentmakers pursue this. editor@globalopp.org for info.

Malaysia – Apprenticeship

Are you interested in the options above? This same brother is willing to bring you along with him in his consulting-training work to observe, help, and investigate business options in S. Malaysia/Singapore. Contact editor@globalopp.org for info.

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Country Update: China

Geography: 3,704,426 sq mi., nearly 50% mountainous, only 15% arable and decreasing because of soil erosion and economic development (20% lost since 1949); plains, deltas, & hills in east; mostly mountains (including Mt. Everest), high plateaus, deserts in west.

Climate: While much is temperate, climate is extremely diverse, from tropical in south to subarctic in north.

Economy: China has been developing at a furious pace with the economy averaging more than 8% for over a decade and with rapid building of power plants (including nuclear), roads, airports, and even whole cities.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Real GDP growth%	11.5	10.0	9.3	8.4	8.3	8.3
GDP: \$2,765.4 billion US; only \$2104/person						

Population: 1.322 billion; Density: 367/sq mi; 92% Han Chinese; 8% ethnic minorities (55)

Urbanization: China has urbanized madly from 18% to 42% between 1978 and 2004 and could reach 75% by 2020. It is achieving in 4 decades what took western nations 300-400 years to achieve.

History: China is home to one of the world's oldest civilizations with a recorded history going back 3500 years. *Zhong guo*, China's name for itself, means 'middle kingdom'—the geographical center of the earth and only true civilization. Even foreign conquerors like the Mongols (1279) and Manchus (1644) did not change the basic ethos of China, but absorbed much Chinese culture themselves. Until the 20th century, China mostly remained a coherent empire influenced by the Confucian vision of an ordered, meritocratic society. But by the 1800s, it grew weak and became dominated by foreign powers.

Europeans began coming to China in the 16th century—first Jesuit priests, then traders and diplomats—and eventually overpowered the conservative empire. Britain's victory in two Opium Wars (1839–42, 56–60) forced China to accept open ports, foreign envoys, Christian



Beijing- Olympic Stadium - building boom

missionaries and British control of Hong Kong. This situation injected Western ideas into China, and in 1912, the last Chinese dynasty (Qing) fell to nationalists under Sun Yat-sen's charismatic leadership. But Sun soon fell and China splintered into warlord-led fiefdoms.

In the ensuing chaos, China endured much turmoil as the Nationalists and the Communists struggled for control. In 1949 after WWII, the Communists won and the Nationalists fled to Taiwan and established the Republic of China as a counter-government.

Communist rule brought radical economic and social changes. After a few years of consensus leadership, Mao turned totally tyrannical and his grand policies caused great suffering. The industrial and agricultural collectives of the Great Leap Forward (1958–60) caused mass famine, and the Cultural Revolution (1966–76) drove the country into political-social chaos.

When Mao died in 1976, the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) was ready for new ideas. Deng Xiaoping, gained control in 1978, dismantled collective farming, began freeing the economy, ended China's political isolation, and moved China toward world power. Deng's successors, Jiang Zemin (1989-2002) and now Hu Jintao, have continued this direction.

Since then China's GDP has quadrupled. Economic growth has run 8% or more for over a decade. In 2003, China became the world's second-largest economy, though in per capita terms, China is still poor.

In 1997 Britain returned control of Hong Kong to China; in 1999 Portugal returned Macau. Taiwan and China continue sensitive negotiations to re-unify. Political freedom has significantly lagged behind economic freedom as shown by the brutal suppression of Tiananmen Square in 1989. The government is no longer truly Communist, but highly autocratic, determined to maintain power and order.

CCP legitimacy rests mostly on economic growth and political stability, resulting in tangible improvements for the vast majority. But for ordinary Chinese this is undermined by



factors like corruption, the growing urban-rural wealth gap, and large lay-offs following privatization. This has provoked unrest. The number and size of protests has risen from 10,000 in 1994 to 87,000 in 2005. This shows not only widespread frustration, but growing freedom to express it. An encouraging sign is that the government punished local authorities responsible for killing demonstrators in recent protests. Also, the government has been working to fix the underlying problems by improving pension, unemployment, healthcare systems, etc.

Religion:

- Non-religious 49.58%
- Chinese religions 28.5%
- Buddhist 8.38%
- Christian 7.25%
- Traditional ethnic 4.29%
- Muslim 2%

The Church in China: Some early traditions say that the apostle Thomas visited China. More reliable tradition reports that Christians brought the gospel to China in the 300s. However, the first well-documented report tells that Nestorian Christians entered China in 635AD along the Silk Road. Christian witness fluctuated and often disappeared for centuries. In 1583 the Jesuit priest Matteo Ricci obtained permission to live in China and established Roman Catholic missions.

Protestants came late to China, arriving with Western trade and imperialism. Missions established themselves along the coast in the mid-19th century. Hudson Taylor, founder of China Inland Mission (now OMF International) in 1865, saw the needs of the inland provinces and with others,

China *from previous page,*

moved inland, establishing churches and hospitals. Work began in western China among minority peoples like the Lisu.

By 1949 China had about 6000 missionaries, 20,000 Protestant churches, and over one million members. When the Communists took over, they expelled the missionaries and suppressed the Church, often brutally, forcing it underground. Many feared the worst, but the Church actually thrived, growing to around 50m Christians.

After Mao's death, Deng Xiaoping allowed churches to reopen under the control of the Three Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) which has grown to over 10m reported Christians in the last 20 years. Also, over 20m Bibles have been printed in China. But, fearing government control, most Christians still refuse to join the official TSPM church and meet in house churches. Authorities continue to exert great pressure on house-churches to register. Persecution is still common, but varies greatly by area. Pastors are imprisoned, materials are confiscated and meetings are closed.

The Church continues to grow rapidly and many Chinese are responsive to the gospel. Though the Church is largely rural, there is much responsiveness by university students.

Pray:

- For rapid reaping from the currently very responsive Chinese. That receptivity may decline rapidly because of materialism, increasing wealth, urbanization, moral decline, spreading corruption, and other factors. Reaching many students and faculty during this receptivity is very important.
- For GO-assisted tentmakers and others to keep their vision and be effective integrating work and ministry.
- For hundreds more tentmakers. And pray for deeply godly, workplace ministry-effective tentmakers who have thoughtfully replaced Western cultural thinking and values with Biblical ones, and who model how to build healthy, disciple-making house churches.
- For Biblical training and growth of Chinese leaders. This is a great cry from China. The danger is that we will transfer classroom, marketing, and organizational patterns along with Western values rather than Biblical patterns of personal discipling, teaching and modeling. Pray for the latter.
- For many more Bibles and study resources.
- For Chinese Christians to develop strong, godly patterns in response to growing wealth, freedom, legitimacy, and busy, diverting urban life.
- For protection under persecution, strengthening through it, and impact from it. 🌐

Sources: *CIA World Factbook, Operation World, Economist Intelligence Unit: Country ViewsWire.* www.chinanews.cn/news/2005/2005-11-18/14441.html.

Mohammed *from page 1,*

Everyone leaned forward. They wanted to know what this foreigner thought. "The answer is simple," I said. "Imagine you are



"Mohammed" in calligraphy

going somewhere you haven't been before. You come to a fork in the road. You are unsure which way to go. Fortunately there are two people at the crossroads. One of them has been before to the place you are going to, and he is alive. The other one has never been there, and he is dead. Whom will you ask: the live person, or the dead one?" Everyone leaned backwards. The analogy was obvious, since Muslims believe that Jesus never died, but was taken up alive to heaven.

The Imam continued, "Even though Mohammed is dead, he was still a prophet, a messenger from God." I nodded, "Yes, you believe that, but I don't, otherwise I would be a Muslim. But what did Mohammed claim for himself? In the *Qur'an* he says to his followers: 'I am no innovation among the prophets, and I do not know what will happen to me or what will happen to you' (*Surah 46:9*). Mohammed, as great a man as he was, did not know whether he would enter Paradise or not. Whereas Jesus says: 'I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father except by me' (*John 14:6*). Mohammed claimed to bring nothing new, and Jesus came to open the gate to heaven."

The widespread frowns showed me that this idea was not accepted. The imam spoke for them all: "No, everyone must get to heaven by their works. No one can be the mediator for anyone else (*Surah 74:48*)." "That's interesting" I replied, "because I have been reading the *Hadith*, the sayings of the prophet recorded by his companions. One day Mohammed said: 'The good deeds of any person will not make him enter Paradise,' i.e. none can enter Paradise through his good deeds. The Prophet's companions said, 'Not even you, O Allah's Apostle?' He said, 'Not even myself, unless Allah bestows His favour and mercy (*rahma*) on me' (*el-Bukhari 7:577*). This saying was well known, because sev-

eral of the listeners recited the last sentence along with me. I continued, "And who, according to the *Qur'an*, is the mercy (*rahma*) of God? It is one of the titles of Jesus (*Surah 19: 20, 21*). Just like Mohammed, each one of us needs Jesus, the mercy of God, in order to be saved. There is no other way. God is one, and the path of salvation is one."

At the end of the evening I rose and went around the room, shaking hands and kissing everyone, as is the local custom. I asked their forgiveness if I had offended anyone, which they all assured me was not the case. Afterward, one of the men came and asked if I could give him an audiotape of the Gospel since I had given one to the host of this meeting on a previous occasion. Pray for the seed to fall on fertile ground.

From an Interserve tentmaker



Missions Glossary

Great Commission: After speaking on missions in his church, Paul Borthwick, of World Evangelical Fellowship, asked a listener what the Great Commission was. He replied, "I don't know—about 30%?"

In the July 1999 *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, Borthwick lists six things churches want mission agencies to do differently. One is: "Speak in terms we understand." Explain even simple concepts. Missions people use so many new missiological terms that we do not even understand each other! Most are not in the dictionary.

Just in case, the Great Commission is Christ's final command to his followers to go into the whole world and make disciples (followers) who keep his commands from among all peoples.

10/40 Window: The slice of the world between 10 and 40 degrees north of the equator stretching from N. Africa east to Japan where the largest number of unreached people live. An imperfect shorthand, it does not include Mongolia or Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim nation. Help us help you. Write, e-mail, fax, or phone us with terms you'd like defined. 🌐

More GO Tentmakers Go!

A couple who attended our Fort Myers tentmaking course is now in a key N. Africa country teaching English. We are very excited about their going to this needy and strategic country.

Another couple who attended our Victoria course this summer is now working in the Middle East.

In their commissioning service, "Bob" said he didn't feel like a missionary but somehow after taking our training, he felt the possibility of planting a house church is now a reality they will be working toward. The church broke into applause.

A couple from our Dallas course has since retired and returned long-term to Afghanistan. "Don" has been teaching engineering in a university and is greatly appreciated. Right now they are giving serious effort to acquiring the language.

Another couple from the Dallas course has just recently moved to the Gulf to do major construction consulting. They are just beginning to build relationships with the local people.

The Hasebes attended our Fort Myers course and have since moved with their two small children to Thailand where they are working as tentmakers.

Ari helped find a retired engineer to go to N India to design earthquake resistant housing. When he returned after a year, Ari received a Thank-You from the tentmaker in India who originally asked for help: "Your engineering/construction contact who went to help out my mate in N-India was a Godsend."

A couple who attended the Victoria course several years ago finally found a job teaching in Lebanon and left this Fall to work there. They are enjoying it, but are very concerned for the country's welfare because of the stalemate between factions in choosing a new president.

Praise God for these committed disciples. Pray for spiritual vitality and impact. 🌍

GO TM Course Expands!

We ran more 4-day tentmaking courses than ever this year and continue to partner with TENT, our Norwegian counterpart, whom we helped launch. Steinar Opheim, a former tentmaker to Azerbaijan is providing strong leadership. He added another course this year at a Bible College near Oslo—our largest so far.

It was a great course with a record 53 students in attendance. Attendees came from multiple European countries plus two from Africa. A very high percentage were 20-somethings. It was highly evident that they were digesting the training from the wonderful discussions we had with them during the breaks.



Largest course to date in Oslo, Norway

Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkey and a "nameless" country are each about to receive a tentmaker from this course!

For those who want to be effective tentmakers, this course is indispensable. Four intense days are totally focused on the core principles and ministry skills required to do effective tentmaking ministry—from workplace witness to discipling to church planting. Participants have told us that *GO's tentmaking course was extremely valuable, that they could have easily skipped much other training and not missed much.*

GO will run courses in Fort Myers, FL in late February and in Victoria, BC, Canada in early July. Go to <http://globalopps.org/ltm/index.htm> to get more info and to register. *Don't leave home without it!*

If you want GO to run a course in your area, contact us. 🌍

Workplace Evangelism

I'm not an expert in evangelism. Yet over a period of years working as an engineer I learned many of the same principles Ruth Siemens learned so well.

How I came to Christ: I became a Christian in my late 20s working at Allied Signal Aerospace in Torrance. One of the people in my department was a major influence in my becoming a Christian. He was well respected for the quality of his work and personal integrity. He was friendly and had a good sense of humor. He didn't go around telling everyone he was a Christian, but if you were around him, it became obvious from little things he'd say and didn't say. He didn't join in conversations when the talk got raunchy and he didn't join in bickering sessions.

By then I'd been curious about Christianity for a couple of years, but I had questions. I didn't ask some of the other Christians because I knew they would get over-excited and immediately try to convert me if I showed the slightest interest. But Hassan answered my questions very matter-of-factly and then stopped. He never pressed. Getting my questions answered and being able to watch a Christian living out his faith in the world in such an appealing way was a powerful influence in my decision to become a Christian.

Job Boredom: After I'd been a Christian for a couple of years, I began to get bored with my job. It seemed meaningless. I wanted to be in full-time service where I could use all my time to serve God. To me this meant either being a pastor or a missionary. It never occurred to me that I could be a full-time servant in the workplace. I had a faulty understanding of work and the Christian life. I thought that work was something you did so you can pay the bills but the only place to serve God was in church activities. I envied pastors who could be in church serving the Lord every day. I did not realize that *the workplace is actually the front lines of spiritual battle.*

My Network: My IE department was made up of 12 people from a variety of backgrounds. All were "engineer types"—logical, analytical—mostly men. Most were atheists, agnostics, or new-agers. A couple were nominal Catholics.

Most of them had negative opinions of Christians just as I used to have—an image

Continued next page - "Workplace Witness"

Workplace Witness *from page 5*

of people who are emotionally and intellectually weak and need a crutch. People who are gullible and have been duped by smooth talking TV evangelists.

If s the same sort of condescending way they perceive primitive tribal peoples with animistic beliefs, looking down on them for their silly superstitions and naivete. Not all people see Christianity this way, but these were engineers who prided themselves on their intelligence. If s the same attitude you find at secular universities.

It was an intimidating place to be a Christian. But I decided to follow the example of my friend (who had by that time been moved to a different department).

Letting them know: I wanted people to know I was a Christian. I found this began to happen in a very natural way. People asked me what I did over the weekend or what I was going to do. I was very involved in my church, so I told them about various church projects I was involved in. I used discretion though and did not bring up things which would be misunderstood and reinforce negative stereotypes of Christians.

For example, I told them about going to Mexico to work in an orphanage, working in a soup kitchen downtown, helping an elderly member of our church paint her house, and going to the beach to pick up trash. I did not tell them about meeting to see how to increase giving in our church, meeting to discipline someone for immorality, or barricading an abortion clinic.

I was surprised when people came up to me on Monday to find out what went on in our church over the weekend. They began to see that being a Christian was more than just sitting in church on Sundays listening to sermons and singing old hymns.

Arousing questions: When people began to find out that I went to church on Sundays and even participated in church activities **during the week** it surprised them because I seemed to be fairly “normal” person otherwise. I did my job well and they knew I could be as logical and analytical as any of them. It made some of them curious. They wanted to know where I went to church. I usually made a point to let them know that I’d only been going for a couple of years, not because I was embarrassed, but so they could see that I had been just like them. I didn’t grow up in the church. My becoming a Christian was something I decided as an adult after spending a long time thinking about it and questioning it I hadn’t been “brain-

washed” since I was a kid and I didn’t have some crisis in my life which led me to look for a crutch. (These are not my views, this is how many non-Christians look at it)

Many people won’t admit it but they struggle with a feeling of dissatisfaction with their lives having no real purpose. If a person really seemed interested, I’d casually invite them to come along, depending on the person and the kind of event Seeing Christians working together joyfully to serve others can be a powerful witness.

I found much to my amazement that there were other people out there like I had been. People are much more interested in spiritual things than they let on. Some began to ask me questions.

Why did you start going to church?

How can you trust the Bible?

What about evolution vs creation?

How can God allow so much evil?

Aren’t all religions basically the same?

Why is Jesus the only way?

What’s the difference between Catholics and Protestants?

Why are there so many denominations?

I spent time reading books which dealt with common questions non-Christians ask so I could give good answers.



Lunch & coffee breaks - chance to talk

Dealing with current issues: I eventually became known as the “Department Christian.” When controversial issues made the news, we often discussed them around the lunch table. Someone would invariably ask me for the Christian viewpoint It really helped to be up on the issues and be able to discuss them from a Christian standpoint We’d talk about issues like gun control, abortion, crime and punishment war, etc...

I heard a discussion on the radio one day talking about the earthquake in Turkey. The host was an atheist and was challenging Christians to call in and explain how God could allow such a terrible thing to

happen. This is just the type of conversation which comes up in lunch rooms and workplaces all over the world.

Not all conversations happened at lunch or on breaks. Every other week or so, we went out to happy hour after work on Friday. Some of our *best* conversations took place there because people felt unhurried and relaxed and would open up.


Sometimes people were hostile with their questions. But responding respectfully with good, thoughtful answers without being intimidated or retaliating usually had a powerful impact In fact these hostile encounters were a blessing in disguise. But it is vital to be prepared with good answers.

It was amazing how people would sometimes open up to me in private about problems they were dealing with. I didn’t always have the answer to their problems but they knew that I cared. I would tell them I would pray for them and depending on the person and the situation I would sometimes pray with them in private. I could tell that people were really touched by the offer of prayer. Even if they didn’t believe in it it was a sign that I cared. After a few prayers were answered some people would come back and share more prayer needs and ask me to pray.

In these ways God opened conversations with all kinds of people, like Ron who was raised a Mormon, had become a confirmed atheist and loved to debate evolution vs. creation; Chris, a former Catholic who opened up about his visit to a catholic church; Anton from Slovakia who was brought up as a nominal Orthodox but began looking for answers; and Pete, a backslidden Christian who started re-examining his relationship with God.

And God drew some to himself over time. For example, Jerry was a great encouragement to me. He called me after two years to tell me he was a Christian.

God is working in people around us and he wants to use us right where we are. Because of natural contact with non-believers and the time we spend together, work is the primary context for our witness. As we live supernaturally different lives, do our work well, care for people around us, talk naturally about God without ever pushing respond graciously and intelligently to people’s questions, and listen to and pray for people’s problems, God is able to draw people to himself.

—Scott Gordon, former GO Director of Operations and tentmaker 

Seminars Grow!

We ran our largest number of 4-hour tent-making seminars this year. These continue to move Christians toward the great global need and opportunity. We also held our largest seminar recently in a Chinese church in Vancouver. We are impressed with these brothers and sisters, especially the coordinator! Ari reported:

A very welcoming, highly motivated group attended last evening's tentmaking seminar at the Chinese EV Free church. The food was prepared by the ladies of the church and was awesome as well. Five people indicated they will come to next summer's tentmaking course in Victoria.

There were many interesting stories of God's leading to this seminar, including a retired Chinese lady who has been asking God what she should do now. So she will be taking ESL training early in the new year and then go to western China.

The most dramatic story came from a highly professional young lady who had to quit a very good job in the hospitality industry recently due to conflicts. As it was a face losing situation, it had really hit her hard and she was questioning why God had allowed it. She found out about the seminar from a friend and delayed her flight to China so she could attend, going straight to the airport afterward.

I told her that one way God gets His people moving is to make it uncomfortable where they are, using "Jerusalem Mission Agency" [in Acts] as an example, where persecution motivated people to leave. She really lit up and saw God's hand in her life, as she already had many solid management level job offers in China at 5-star hotels catering to the world.

We ended up agreeing that during this trip to China she would attend interviews and seek God's leading, but that she would not commit to a job yet. Her home church needs to be in a position to send her and she also wants to attend the course next summer.

One fellow will be coming to the course as he seeks God to see if he should join us as a mobilizer or go as a tentmaker. He would be a valuable asset to our team. ☺

Retire!

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started to get information from several organizations that send teachers to China. When we had paid our debt, we applied to several and three accepted us.

We chose to go with the one in Seattle, where my brother and family lived, and felt that God Himself had arranged it. They sent us to a university in Xiamen (pronounced shamun), a port city in south-eastern China, across from Taiwan, in September 1988. Andy was 66 and I was 65 years old.

Sometimes people ask us whether we felt "called" to China. We have to answer, "Not really," but the longer we've been here, the more we feel that God has us just where He wants us. When we first came to China, we thought we'd try it for a year or two, but found that we thoroughly enjoyed teaching our Chinese students, and stayed in our first job for three years.

As we seek to find out why, with such millions of Christians, the real army of God that is fighting the hosts of darkness is so small, the only answer is - lack of heart. The enthusiasm of the kingdom is missing. And that is because there is so little enthusiasm for the King.

- Andrew Murray

Just before we came to China, we had taken a trip to Israel and while there had bought two mezuzahs, cases containing Old Testament scriptures which many Jewish people put on the doorposts of their homes. Andy put one on the doorposts of both our home in Illinois and of our apartment here in Beijing.

One afternoon when we came home, on the pad of paper we kept on our front door so people could leave messages, was the Hebrew script for "Shalom." I didn't recognize the Hebrew, but Andy did. Later, a young woman in the hall said, "Are you the people in 202?"

We said, "Yes, we are."

She then asked, "Are you Jewish?"

We said, "No, we're Christians, but we love the Jewish people and bought the mezuzah in Israel just before we came to China."

She, a Jewish woman who had made ali-

yah (immigrated) to Israel, was the director of 40 United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) who were teaching English, mostly to future Chinese teachers of English at Chinese universities. We asked her to come in for a cup of tea, and as we talked,



So many are responsive to Christ in China

we told her about a project we were doing showing our students good American movies. We made scripts of the movies, studied them with our students, and then showed them the movies with the use of a caption decoder so that they could read the captions as they watched.

She said, "What a pity that you can't share that work with the United Nations Volunteers who are teaching in China! Why don't you apply to the UNV program and if they accept you, you can

share your ideas?"

We applied, were accepted, and then came to Beijing to the premier university for minority students in China. Ninety percent of the people in China are Han Chinese; 55 ethnic minorities make up the other 10%. Our university, the Central University for Nationalities (ethnic minorities), had 90% minority students and 10% Han Chinese, so it gave us a wonderful opportunity to meet students from many ethnic groups.

We taught there for three years, and then I was hired to teach the employees of one of China's largest government-owned companies. While there, I was offered a job as an editor for a major English-language television news program, but after nine months, I went back to the company.

When the company dropped their English program to teach German and French, we

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Retire! from page 7

moved out into the countryside which is still part of Beijing, where we have been for the past six years. Here, we've been teaching English at several different places—to teachers in two high schools, to students in a middle school, and at a private English Learning Center.

Andy and I were married later in life than most people (he was 45; I was 44), so we felt it was a bit late to start a family. Now we have a wonderful family, mostly former Chinese students whom we think of as "sons" and "daughters." In fact, we're now having "grandchildren," one of whom is even named after Andy! A couple of years ago when one of our "sons" and "daughters-in-law" found that their baby was going to be a boy, they asked if it was all right if they named him "Andrew . . . Yang" after Andy. Aren't we fortunate?!

We feel, 18 years later at the ages of 85 and 84, that these past years have been the most worthwhile of our lives. We are grateful to God that our health remains good and that He has given us the opportunity to serve the Chinese people by teaching them English. Since English has become the language of international trade, technology, the Internet, computers, and aviation, we feel we are helping to fill a vital need.

We would like to stay here in China as long as our health remains good. In fact, Andy, my husband, says that he wouldn't mind if we're here long enough so that I end up taking him home in a box. I tell him I'd rather take him home in an urn because it would be \$7,000 cheaper!

We thank God every day for the way He led us to serve Him in China and for the privilege of being here.

—"Andy" & "Faith," "retired" in China

This couple has had an incredible ministry through teaching, hospitality, and gifts of baked goodies. Students have flowed through their home asking questions about God and evolution, watching Moody science films, studying the Bible and hearing the gospel. They have helped a number come to Christ and grow in him. And they continue to disciple and nurture some of them. We have enjoyed having them work with us at Urbana.

Source: *The Unreached Peoples' Advocate*, Winter 2007, Vol. 10, No. 1. 🌐

Tentmaker Mailbag

Equatorial Guinea – Mendall Rogers who attended GO's tentmaking course, teaches English (ESL) in Equatorial Guinea, a poor country in W Africa which has started producing oil. This has brought foreign companies and money and a demand for English training. Mendall works for one of the oil companies, witnessing to people she works with. She also runs a free Good News English school through which she is reaching other Equatorial Guineans. The school graduated their first group last Spring.

Mendall has paid a price. Three times she has had to replace a stolen laptop. Recently, she had to return to the US for major dental surgery, but God provided through a Christian dental surgeon. Her school (and home) has been broken into

repeatedly, but a local pastor opened his home for her to live with his family like another daughter.

Her former supervisor unjustly tried to squeeze her out of her job, but God provided an even better job with another company. Over and over God has given Mendall strength and met her need. Not surprisingly, Guineans are coming to Christ through her witness.

Thailand – Chris C, teaching English in Bangkok, had a great opening in the teacher's lounge when the most outspoken agnostic asked if he were a Christian and what he thought of evolution. After giving a thoughtful answer, the man replied that he knew of some scientists who had come to Christ because of their research. He then asked about Chris's church. So Chris



told how God supernaturally impacted his fiancée through the worship. God is working!

Japan – Sun Moon, who helped GO at Urbana, has been teaching English. She just wrote "I just haven't had a chance to send any updates lately. I'm still here in Tokyo working and ministering. Right now, I'm praying about whether I should stay here longer or move on to some other place."

Pray for these tentmakers.

Join the Action!

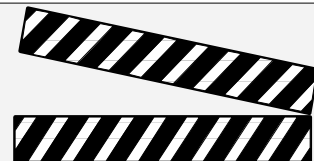
Mobilize tentmakers!

The need is tremendous. So is the opportunity. Talk to others about going as tentmakers.

- Share GO's website: www.globalopps.org
- Request & share GO brochures
- Host a Tentmaking Seminar
- Send friends to GO's Tentmaking Course

Reach Internationals!

God is bringing millions of other people groups to the U.S., to our colleges, workplaces, and neighborhoods. God can use you. Give time to building friendships, hosting people in your home, and leading Bible studies. Newcomers have many needs and open up to genuine care and friendship. And reaching internationals builds cross-cultural ministry skills for potential tentmaking overseas.



Pray!

- For tentmakers mentioned here
- For Internationals around you
- For GO's increased impact through seminars, courses, & mentoring
- For more tentmakers & their impact
- For God's heart & leading personally
- For your church's vision

Invest

Where you put your treasure determines where your heart is also. Invest in Christ's global mission not only in your church, but beyond. It will enlarge your heart and and Christ's work.

Consider GO for part of your investment. GO gives significant returns in terms of where tentmakers can go and the impact they have with minimal cost.