



Reaching Across the Divide

Lost and confused on the earthquake-ravaged streets of Kobe, Japan, I asked a stranger where the subway station was. "Go right at Lawson's. Then go straight," the man replied.

Carrying heavy bags, I turned right and walked five minutes. My arms ached, but no station was in sight. The next person I asked took me straight to the station—directly opposite the way I was told. Why? Probably the first stranger couldn't admit he didn't know where the station was. Embarrassment or "politeness"—a cultural necessity to offer an answer—impelled him to give directions.

How do you witness in a culture where a person cannot tell you "no" directly? Japanese sometimes reply, "Yes, I want to receive Christ," even though they don't know what that means. They just want to please the earnest, exotic, blond-haired college

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Learning Islam Gains Respect

A tentmaker couple, "Josh" and "Anne," work in a tightly closed Muslim country and have gained respect for the competent, caring social work they provide through their agency. They learned the local Arabic early, so they are able to communicate well with the people. They have adapted to the local culture. They and their colleagues have won a number of Muslims to the Lord, so that three small struggling churches meet for worship. They have also suffered persecution—even death threats, but they have stayed.

But now, a significant change has occurred. On their last leave in the US, Josh continued his graduate studies in Islamics at Yale University. He didn't realize how this would enhance his prestige when they returned to their work abroad. Josh was surprised to be invited to a meal with a

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Into North Korea!

July 1999 - Contact: In July 1999, "Tom" emailed me at the urging of a friend. He desired to "provide aid to the truly destitute in developing countries," through small business development. He had already taught English in Uzbekistan as a tentmaker, learned Uzbek, had since earned an MBA in finance, and was working in Toronto. He wondered what options Global Opportunities could provide.

I replied explaining that GO does not send donor-supported mission workers. Rather we help Christians go as missions-committed professionals to reach people as everyday Christians. This way they operate with full integrity without any false pretense. I listed some advantages of tentmaking—natural contact with nonbe-

lievers on the job, heightened credibility as satisfied customers rather than as paid salespeople, and modeling a pattern of witness by regular Christians and so by all Christians. I sent him to our website for more input and encouraged him to use his obvious language gift as a tentmaker.

"Tom" responded that he was "very interested" in linking with GO and loved the tentmaking concept. "I asked the Lord when I left Uzbekistan that I would never get into another undercover situation where I could not walk in the light about what I was doing and who I was. 'Having' to lie and do things undercover is probably not God's way." Tom became a GO Associate in November. In January he wrote that he had led several to Christ in a homeless ministry in Toronto—a Muslim, a Hindu, a native American and a Nigerian.

Fall 2000 - S. Korea:

The next time I heard, Tom had taken a contract teaching English in South Korea as a tentmaker. Why South Korea (SK)? Because he hoped to get into North Korea (NK) which is so closed to the West and so needy. SK would allow him to learn the language and culture and to look for openings in NK.

Tom immediately began

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North Korea - children of famine

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Tentmaking Tips

When asked succinct advice to those desiring to serve as tentmakers, Ruth Siemens gave the following pointers:

1. *Ability* is important. Everyone needs adequate job preparation, and on-the-job and free-time ministry skills. But more important than *ability* is *availability*. God cannot use you where you are not.
2. In his body, Jesus was limited to one location at a time. Now he indwells us by his Spirit so he can be millions of places at once! Besides our minds and hearts, we must present him our bodies also—eyes, ears, lips, hands, and especially, our feet, to bring him face-to-face with people he longs to reach. (Rom 12:1, 6:12ff, 10:15.)
3. Never assume a closed door is locked. It may only need a push or two. God may be giving you time to see if your commitment is strong enough or if you back down with relief. Delays are never a waste if we continue to develop ministry skill.
4. Most of us with overseas experience wish we could go back to our early ministry and do it over—without the mistakes. But we never have that option. At every stage of life, if we simply give God both our little fish and all five barley rolls, he multiplies them to achieve his purposes.
5. God sends no “finished products” because he has none. He doesn’t say, “Now after all that training, let’s see what this guy can do in Timbuktu.” In one sense, he doesn’t even *send*; he goes with us (because he is in us!). So his in-service training never stops. (Mk 1:15, 1 Cor 1:27)
6. So long as we stay home, we can control our circumstances and not get in too deep. One spiritual benefit of tentmaking abroad is losing that control and discovering first-hand in hard situations that all rumors about God’s love and care are true!
7. Establish the habit of a daily prayer time, and converse with the Lord throughout the day.
8. Develop skill in truly *inductive Bible study*. You will need to feed yourself and your family, maybe your teammates, and local believers as well! Only if you regularly study can you regularly give to others. You can’t serve yesterday’s manna.
9. Memorize key scriptures in *context*. This is remarkably helpful when working in a foreign language.
10. Love the people! It makes up for all kinds of mistakes! – RS ☺

Credibility

It had been less than six months and already I had the privilege of leading a young Thai woman to Christ. Before arriving in Bangkok, I read that for every 45



Young Buddhist Monks in Thailand

years a missionary stays in Thailand, one person will become a convert and that Thailand was more hardened to Christianity than neighboring countries like Malaysia and China. Needless to say, I was thrilled by Sitawan’s salvation in such a short period of time!

In the weeks following her life-altering decision, I began discipling Sitawan, always with other people around to prevent any misunderstanding. Nevertheless, I sensed Sitawan was developing a romantic attachment. So I began distancing myself little by little from her, encouraging her to learn the Way from a Thai Christian sister. Relieved, I felt I had resolved things well.

But two months later, I discovered that Sitawan interpreted the situation very differently out of her 29-year life experience of missionaries. I vividly remember sitting at a street-side restaurant discussing how her life was going. Suddenly she had said something that really shook me. She told me that the reason I distanced myself from her was that “My job was over. I had made her a Christian and needed to move on to other people to try to make them Christians.”

She shocked me further by her knowledge of missionaries. She explained that missionaries were “paid” by churches back in America “to be nice to people in order to make converts.” They then report the stories back to their supporters. Once
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Doorways!

Sample Job Opportunities

Libya – TEFL Instructors

Established, desert-based, technical training center urgently needs instructors to teach conversational & technical English to young Libyan technicians employed by major oil company. Req: BA, TEFL cert., 5-years experience, preferably overseas/Middle East, MS Word; Pay: long term job, good salary, housing (bachelor’s), full board, RT flights, medical, and leave.

Laos - Community Health Adviser/Project Manager

To improve capacity of two provincial governments to provide Primary Health Care (PHC) services, nutritional status & food security, environmental sanitation & access to potable water, to investigate childhood diseases, and to increase village and government health planning and management capacity.

Singapore & China – IT trainer-consultants

Three Chinese Christian businesspeople seek missions-committed IT professionals to develop profitable IT service companies for SMEs in automotive, food production, education, biotech, & IT/telecom manufacturing. Ministry will focus on young adult Chinese. Openings: systems admin., software developer, IT business analyst, network engineer; Req: degree, 5 yrs. exper., English & Mandarin, good analytical, organizing, problem-solving skills; Pay: \$900/mo. to begin, furnished housing, co. ownership/bonus plans, airfare for permanent employees, annual leave.

Malaysia – ESL Teacher-Consultant

Needed from Dec. 02 to June 03 to start English institute in a rural town famous for beaches, diving, natural scenery, wildlife. Req: ESL certification, experience; Pay: \$500/mo., adequate for single; supplemental support needed for family.

Kabul, Afghanistan - Various Faculty

President of Kabul Univ. said, “We are 30 years behind and need all the help you can give.” ESL, agriculture, economics, education, engineering, fine arts, geology, Islamic Shari’a, journalism, language/literature, law, pharmacy, science, social science, veterinary med. Adjoining Kabul Medical Institute—basic sciences, some clinical, & four dental faculty. Req: relevant degree, experience; Pay: unknown; Timing: In place by March 11 as classes resume after winter break.

Pescadores – ESL Teachers

Tentmakers running private ESL schools need ESL teachers. Req: BA in any field; North American accent, some ESL, basic Mandarin a plus; good pay and ministry options.

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North Korea Update

Crisis and Suffering: N. Korea's economy is collapsing and people are hurting terribly. Suffering from severe centralization and isolation, prolonged mismanagement, natural disasters, infrastructure deterioration, obscene military spending, and breakdown of foreign trade and assistance, especially after the disintegration of communism, N. Korea's condition is desperate. While other struggling, centralized economies have opted for much greater economic, trade, and investment freedom, NK has resisted any fundamental change. It maintains rigid political and ideological control. National debt is 49% of GDP and per capita GDP has fallen by about half, from \$991 to \$457.

NK spends 25-31% of GDP and hoards military food supplies to maintain the fourth largest army in the world—1.2 million troops, 20% of all fighting-age males. Meanwhile, from 270,000 to 2 million civilians have died from famine since 1995 with eight straight years of food shortage. Today, foreign aid provides *one-third* of NK's food needs. This is alleviating widespread hunger, but people, especially children, are struggling with ongoing malnutrition and deteriorating living conditions. A recent UNICEF report put NK last among 110 developing nations for child nutrition. About 60% suffer malnutrition and 45% are stunted or suffer chronic malnutrition.

Politics: NK is a highly centralized, dictatorial communist state. KIM Jong-il has ruled NK since his father, the country's founder, KIM Il-sung, died in 1994. Something of a megalomaniac, Jong-il has deified his father and encourages people to call him "Dear Leader."

According to legend, the god-king Tangun founded Korea in 2333 BC. Sometimes dominated by its larger neighbors, Korea was mostly independent till the late 1800s. Western "gunboat diplomacy" in the mid-1800s led to Korea's closing and becoming the "Hermit Kingdom."

Then in the late 1800s, China tried to block growing Japanese and Russian influence on Korea, triggering the Sino-Japanese (1894-95) and Russo-Japanese Wars (1904-05). Japan won both and annexed Korea to its growing empire in 1910. Japan tightly controlled Korea and ruthlessly suppressed Korean language and culture till the end of WWII in 1945.

However, Japan's unexpectedly early surrender led to the abrupt division of Korea at the 38th parallel, with the U.S. running the south and U.S.S.R., the north. Intended to be temporary, growing conflict between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. led to the Korean War (1950-53) and permanent partition into two diametrically opposed socio-economic-political systems.

Just in the last few years, serious hope for reunification has begun to grow. Also, because of its desperation, hope is rising that NK will allow more social, economic, even religious freedom. North Korea's long-range missiles, nuclear,



chemical, and biological weapons, and massive army continues to upset the global community.

Geography: 47,000 sq. mi., similar to Mississippi; 80% moderately high mountain with deep, narrow valleys and small cultivated plains; remainder, scattered, lowland plains; 14% arable; Capital – Pyongyang.

Population: 22.2 million; racially homogeneous, small Chinese community, a few Japanese; **Language:** Korean, a Ural-Altaic language related to Japanese, and remotely to Hungarian, Finnish, Estonian, Mongolian.

Religion: severely repressed, 64% non-religious; Traditional religions: folk religion 16%, Chondogyo (Eastern syncretistic/egalitarian) 13.4%, and Buddhism 4.5%; Christian 1.7%.

Prayer:

1. Preservation, empowering and fruitfulness of the underground church. Also needed Bible study training which makes the church more effective, self-nurturing, self-reproducing.
2. For the huge majority with no knowledge of Jesus to see and hear the gospel in a way that awakens spiritual hunger.
3. For God to deploy witnesses and work through available means:
 - a. Korean, Chinese Christians in China, especially businesspeople with easy access.
 - b. S. Korean Christians who are waiting for access to open between the two countries.
 - c. Business/humanitarian tentmakers to give effective witness by life and word to draw out seekers despite government gag orders.
 - e. S. Korean, TWR, and FEBC Christian radio to be heard and heeded. Most radios are pre-set to government stations.
4. Economic collapse, for God to reverse it and use it to open people's hearts to him. 🌐

Korean Church Miracle!

Missionary work did not begin in the "Hermit Kingdom" until decades after China and Japan. The Japanese forced it open in 1830. Then in 1882, the U.S. made a treaty, and Presbyterians sent medical tentmaker, Dr. Horace Allen. He saved the life of the Queen's nephew, gaining her favor for Christians, and began their first government hospital. Presbyterians, Methodists, and others sent more, but they couldn't begin to disciple all the Koreans coming to the Lord! These converts did not come from evangelistic campaigns, but from personal witness by new believers—untrained, everyday Christians!

How did this develop? The Koreans were disillusioned with Buddhism because of ill treatment by China and Japan. Many worshipped nature and feared evil spirits. Japanese were seen as imperialists, but Western missionaries were not.

Far more vital was the visit of veteran missionary John Nevius from China. He convinced the early missionaries to adopt Paul's "tentmaker" model of indigenous church planting. All churches were self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing from the start. New converts were expected to evangelize their networks. No paid workers were allowed till Koreans wanted and paid them. No programs or buildings were started, till Koreans initiated and paid for them. The church ran on unpaid lay evangelism, daily morning prayer meetings, Bible study groups, house fellowships, worship, conservative doctrine, church discipline, generosity, and suffering. The Holy Spirit fell in a special way in 1907, and multitudes came to faith. Pyongyang became the "Jerusalem of the East."

When Japan annexed Korea, it saw Christians as foes and persecuted them terribly except for a brief respite in the 20s. Then in the 30s, Japan imposed emperor worship and imprisoned, tortured and executed thousands. But survivors remained faithful. In 1940 (WWII), all missionaries were expelled and many, tortured in concentration camps. After partitioning, persecution became so intense that thousands fled south, over 100,000 are interned in labor camps, and the Church went underground.

Today S. Korea is one-third Christian, has the world's biggest church—600,000, and hosts the largest Pentecostal, Presbyterian and Methodist churches, and second largest Baptist church! Plus, it has over 10,000 missionaries abroad! It is the bright light of Asia! Koreans are skilled businesspeople—great tentmakers! Thousands emigrate and always start churches. (3000 in US!)

Meanwhile, the N. Korean church may number 400,000, and is growing 14%/ year! All by unpaid lay evangelism! The Korean churches are unmatched anywhere! This 110-year case study leaves no doubt of the power of Paul's unpaid lay evangelism strategy—tentmaking strategy for pioneer church planting!

Into N. Korea *from page 1.*

leading people to Christ in his work network. He also threw himself into helping ministries for migrant workers and homeless people in Seoul. Through the year, over 20 professed faith in Christ, but only six became "real disciples." So he asked for help with discipling.

I suggested that he disciple people in a small group as Jesus did. Carry out three purposes in the group: 1) inductive Bible study, 2) acting on the truth learned, and 3) reaching out to others. Genuinely *investigate* specific passages together so new believers discover the truth themselves rather than being told what the text says. This way, they learn to trust the Bible and go to it for answers. They also learn how to interpret it themselves and how to lead Bible study with others. They become self-nurturing, self-multiplying, and self-directed—they develop a self-reproducing movement!

Tom began doing this right away, and God led him to some Navigators to help him disciple these new believers. But he had grown discouraged about getting into NK. Then God opened a door.

March-August 2001 – Visit to NK: In late March, Tom met two Christians who are developing a small agribusiness in NK. This business multiplies certain agricultural production and incubates new businesses. This agribusiness can reach people from all over NK—as they come to learn how to do this process. It can bless people physically and spiritually in a country where many go hungry. This

"I asked the Lord when I left Uzbekistan that I would never get into another undercover situation"

project perfectly fit "Tom's" education, background, and passion. Then in April, they asked him to join them to do personnel training and development!

After finishing his contract, Tom visited NK for 2 weeks in August. It was sobering. On one hand, the business was encouraging—growing, providing jobs, and developing people. Need was obvious, spiritually and physically.

But the situation was daunting. The country was far behind economically. Local roads were unpaved. When Tom tried to give something to help people, the authorities stopped him and threatened to

fine him. (They are embarrassed and hate dependency. However, they welcome the agribusiness because it develops self-sufficiency.) He met no local Christians. Whenever he mentioned God, the N. Koreans objected that their "beloved leader"



North Korea's "Beloved Leader"

did not permit them to discuss this. The government is very restrictive.

He began to question whether God really wanted him there. He spoke little Korean, NK would be isolated, and how could he witness? I reminded him that God had opened an incredible door to do just the kind of work he wanted. I had also previously introduced him by email to Ari, our Tentmaker Mobilizer in Canada. I also encouraged him to attend Light to the Nations, our tentmaker training course in Pasadena.

Late-August 2001 – Canada: Tom returned to Canada and spent a day with Ari struggling with this decision. After all, he argued, S. Korea is not so evangelized as people claim—there is great need there. Also, people are forbidden to discuss religion in NK.

Ari listened, encouraged, and raised questions. Finally he said, "You may be right, but you can't convince me that S. Korea is that needy compared to other nations. Even Canada is much more unevangelized than SK."

Then he said, "Let me tell you how I'd respond to the objection that the leader won't let us talk about God. I'd say, 'You know what the Bible says about leaders? It commands us to honor those in authorities and pray for them.' Then I'd change the subject and wait for them to respond." That turned the tide. Soon after Tom emailed his friends, "Well, I have decided to follow Jesus back to NK."

October 2001 – Pasadena to NK: With further encouragement from Ari, Tom delayed his departure to NK long enough to attend GO's Light to the Nations training. Along with other like-minded, wonderful people, he dove into

core ministry skills for four intense days—workplace evangelism, evangelistic Bible studies, discipling, entering another culture, church planting, and more.

Then from "Light to the Nations," Tom flew straight to NK. Almost no one is getting into NK, Christian or non-Christian. But God opened a door and used GO to help Tom go and to be better equipped to make disciples. The story continues to unfold. Tom has enjoyed working with people in the small agribusiness, but he could not escape the enormous needs of the poor. So the business began providing food products directly to nearby people. But the need is so great that Tom is developing more initiatives to train, employ, and feed people. - DE 🌐

GO's Website

Activity:

- **Visitors** – During the last year, 320 different people/day visited GO's main page, 9600/month! This compares with just 27 people/day at the end of 1999
- **FAQs** – People access the FAQs 120 times/day, consistently in the top 5 pages! (To mail these by regular post would cost us \$1,000s each year.)
- **Ruth Siemens** – Ruth's articles are accessed an average 1036 times/day, 32,000/month, 378,000/year!
- **Training pages** – Light to the Nations course – 71 times/day; Tentmaking Seminar – 50 times/day
- **Contacts** – One new person contacts us via email every day of the year!
- **Top ten countries** where visitors come from in alphabetical order –

Australia	Netherlands
Canada	New Zealand
Finland	Norway
Germany	UK
Hong Kong	USA

 - Almost every country with Internet access appear in the top 50.

Implications:

- GO's website serves the world!
- Almost every visitor comes for tentmaking info, since our site holds little interest to others.
- Ruth Siemen's life and teaching has gained broader exposure and impact.
- The website is a cost effective, powerful way to reach potential tentmakers. - AR 🌐

Hospitality in Asia

Tentmaker couple "Ron" and "Jan" not only use their medical training in a needy Muslim country, but also have a marvelous ministry with neighbors and children. Their medical care continues unabated. Since the phone usually doesn't work and most people do not have one anyway, people just drop in any time. Flexibility is essential in cross-cultural witness. They have also started a couple of orphanages, which are becoming largely self-sufficient.

They are very committed to connecting with the local people. Even the toddler is learning to speak the local language! They write: "Hospitality is a major part of our ministry and purpose in our city. We have two rooms to accommodate guests." We can attest to Jan's hospitality from when she volunteered in our GO office. Their home is the center both for medical care and for warm hospitality. And their love and relational attachment are paying off—they are now planting their first church!



Friendly people in Central Asia

A recent secular study showed that the most important factor by far in cross-cultural effectiveness is not the ability to perform the job, but the quality of personal relationships developed with local individuals. Sadly, instead of opening their homes, too many missionaries deliberately live far enough away that the local people rarely interrupt their personal or family life. Without cars, they cannot come. Too few mission workers develop genuine peer friendships with local people. The emphasis is on the task. This is why many have limited impact.

But "Ron" and "Jan" follow Paul's example in 1 Th. 2:8 (NRSV), "So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us." To the point of weariness—but with the love of Jesus, and the strength that he daily provides. The quality of their relationships is a major reason for their impact. —RS

World Briefs: God at Work

Worldwide Persecution of Christians

The Religious Liberty Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) estimates more than 200 million Christians are denied full human rights as defined by the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights simply because they are Christians—the largest group oppressed for their beliefs. The group presented these findings in its Geneva Report 2002 to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights on April 8 in Geneva. The report detailed specifics of persecution in India, Greece, Cyprus, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkmenistan, China and Sudan. (WEA)

Colombia

Drug trade is horribly destructive in Colombia. It corrupts, terrorizes, extorts, and kills. Colombians are trapped between the drug lords and guerrilla terrorists, the huge landowners and their paid paramilitary forces, and the so far ineffective Colombia army. Drug traffickers tell small farmers they can make 10-50 times as much raising cocaine and either raise it or face the consequences—destruction/loss of farm, even death. This creates a big dilemma for Christians resulting in huge urban migration and clogging cities.

What hope is there? The rapidly growing Colombian church! Christian leaders infuriate guerrilla leaders and drug lords because they oppose violence, drugs and corruption, and are leading corrupt politicians, guerrillas and criminals to turn to Christ from evil. Jeannine Brabon, missionary to Medellin's notorious Bellavista Prison, has seen many prisoners come to Christ—leftist guerrillas, right-wing paramilitaries, drug mafiosos, police, killers-for-hire and common criminals. FARC guerrillas mark evangelicals as "legitimate" targets because of alleged political involvement, even though they actively oppose war and pursue peace through dialogue.

Eight years ago, a missionary couple started a church in Medellin. It grew from five to 3,300 in three services and 550 home Bible study groups, the city's second-largest church. About 120 come to Christ every week. Hit men and even militants give up guns and bow to Christ. Prostitutes are also coming. And it's happening across the nation. In former drug centers like Cali and Medellin, Christians fill 45,000-seat soccer stadiums three times a year to pray all night for their nation. (WEA & Pulse 2/8/02, 8/23/02)

Global Recession

Recession is hurting Americans, but nothing

compared to the developing world. Recession is shrinking orders from the U.S. and other western nations. In Poland, unemployment is over 17% and climbing the highest since the collapse of communism in 1989. SE Asians are struggling with fewer jobs and rising prices. Indonesian poverty has jumped from 17% to 23%. Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines are suffering similarly. Even Hong Kong and Singapore are suffering. And the recession is magnifying Turkey's and Argentina's internal economic crises.

India

Bibles For The World evangelist Rochunga Pudaite met with 64 leaders of the Dalits, India's outcastes, in a summit this week in Bombay. Pudaite sees a lot at stake. "This group has been trying to invent a new religion that is not Buddhist, Christian or Islam. They want to renounce Hinduism, but they have not been able to invent a new one. So, I'm going to meet with them . . . giving them what Jesus Christ can do for them." Some groups contend a mass religious exit is more political than spiritual. Pudaite counters, "If this group decides to become Christian, a minimum of five million will be following them. So, it's a very, very significant . . . and I need God to really anoint me afresh to talk to them." (Mission Network News, 11/15/02; www.gospelcom.net/mnn/#2)

This summit is part of a growing exodus from Hinduism. On Nov. 4, 2001, Ram Raj led 20-30,000 Dalits in converting to Buddhism. Tens, maybe hundreds of thousands more were blocked by police. Future mass conversions are planned, with greater numbers turning to Christianity. Dr. Joseph D'Souza estimates 1500 Dalits and low-caste Indians turn to Christianity each day, 100 to Islam, and some to Buddhism. Why? Because they realize they have been ostracized, dehumanized, oppressed, and duped by Hinduism. Hindu fundamentalists are responding with growing violence and have pushed through anti-conversion legislation in two states in violation of the Indian constitution. Since upper castes control most wealth and power in India and are the only ones allowed to become full Hindus, they are very upset by this exodus and trying desperately to stop it. But many Christian leaders believe there is no turning back. India is going through a seismic societal shift and the Church must respond effectively to bring millions to genuine conversion and rescue India's whole future. (various sources)

Learning Islam *from p. 1*

leading Muslim imam (a scholarly religious leader) and his associate. Muslims consider all Westerners "Christians" as part of Christendom. The younger man asked most of the questions. He wanted to know what the Bible teaches about the Trinity, the death of Jesus, the way of salvation, eschatology, alcohol, adultery, etc. Josh was able to answer and to explain the Gospel in terms of Muslim culture.

The imam was impressed that Josh had done such serious, respectful study of Islam at such a prestigious institution, and said he was ashamed that Muslims were not putting the same effort into understanding the Christian faith. He concluded



Calligraphic "Allah;" Koran, Islamic Museum, Cairo

that Christians are not "the enemy of Islam." The true enemy is secular humanism, materialism, immorality, and pornography. Muslims should view Christians as allies, not enemies. He also commented that the only people giving serious help to poor people all over Africa were Christians, not Muslims.

This change of attitude in Muslim authorities is almost unheard of! In these countries, Christians are seen as the enemy of all that is good and decent, as purveyors of pornography, alcohol and militarism, and as haters of Islam and destroyers of the Islamic cultural heritage. Josh has even been invited to other Muslim nations to speak as a Christian Islamic expert. His academic credibility, caring humanitarian service, and erudite, respectful discussion have opened doors never opened before.

Not every tentmaker needs to become an Islamicist, nor study at Yale. But Josh's experience shows the value of having a good understanding of Islam, especially when speaking to authorities and religious leaders. Of course, most Muslims, like most "Christians," have little knowledge of their own "holy book." So in personal evangelism, you must listen to and understand where each individual is religiously and speak to that. But, in the wake of the 9/11 attack, you can point out the terribly cruel things Mohammed did and taught, and then ask, "I meet so many kind, peace-loving Muslims. How do you explain these terrible things in your religion?" 🌐

How Evangelism Works

Tell me the essence of your faith!

The highlight for me happened the last day. I returned to the university to say my farewells, when "Jan," a former student and now a teacher in my department, gave me that piercing Soviet-Central-Asian look and blurted out, "Miss 'Fay,' I love you so much. You are a Christian, right? Tell me the essence of your faith!"

After recovering from this abrupt request, we sat down over that bottomless cup of Central Asian tea and talked Jesus Christ, the Essence of my faith! I stuttered through the first few sentences since "Rex," the department head, an atheist and former card-carrying Communist, sat across the table and drank in every word. I realized I could jeopardize my ever being allowed to come back to teach. But Jan had asked. That was God's signal. So I answered. "But," she said, "if Jesus is God, then how could he allow himself to be spit on!" "Because of his love . . ."

Beside me, "Cindy" prayed as we talked. Jan had been searching for God in the Koran, but did not find him. She has the *Jesus* video and the N.T. in her language. I believe Jan will soon be one of the new believers. For the department chair, this was the first time I ever shared my full testimony with him. - FF, *Central Asia*

Leisure Discussions

"Michelle's" Arabic tutor called her into the kitchen one day and asked for prayer. "I want love, peace and patience and joy and gentleness inside. How can I?" I thought she must have memorized Gal. 5:22! She is facing some very tough family situations and feels helpless and desires God's help.

She is having me read much from the Bible and memorizing passages. She told me she wants me to learn to share these things in Arabic. Not easy, but I press on.

Lately she has asked "Michelle" to go walking and talk about the lectures she (Michelle) attended at church on stress and parenting teens. The last two weeks, she has requested that Michelle bring her English Bible to tell her what it says about Ruth and Rahab. The first time seemed to whet her appetite. Ruth and Rahab can lead to even deeper answers in Jesus. -The Ms, *Oman* 🌐

Credibility *from p. 2*

people are converted, missionaries move on to others so they can get more stories to tell. In this more "open" country, she understood that missionaries get paid for their missions work. We are paid to act like Christ. It is our job to make converts. Now I understand why Paul chose to be self-supporting "rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ" by accepting support. (1Co 9:12)

She explained that while I was discipling her, I was like a brother to her and that she could understand how Jesus acted because of my life, unlike other Christians she encountered in the past. But when I distanced myself from her in order to eliminate any romantic confusion, I put myself on the same shelf as other Christians and missionaries in her mind. Now, two years later, she's still a believer, but she feels a little disillusioned with missionaries. I wonder how many other Thai people think the same way. Do we undermine the credibility of the gospel when the majority of us come over as paid messengers? - CC, *Thailand* 🌐

LTN Impact

Light to the Nations, GO's intensive tentmaker training, again changed people's model of church and missions. The key task of LTN is changing people's paradigm of tentmaking to recapture the power of the New Testament pattern.

People learn that NT tentmaking is not ultimately an access strategy, but a pattern of church and missions that makes all Christians carriers of the gospel. It expects everyday Christians to run with the gospel, make disciples, and start new fellowships. This is the secret of the early Church's rapid expansion and of every case since—and of church planting movements.

LTN begins with this "new" model and builds around it essential ministry skills. And this group got it! They began to see how to integrate work and witness, how to integrate evangelism, discipling, and church planting, and how to develop self-reproducing churches (house fellowships).

What a great group! Very responsive, and one of the most ethnically diverse LTNs, they really clicked and wouldn't go to bed Saturday night! They were delightful.

And what is most exciting? A steady stream of LTNers are going overseas as tentmakers! Lord, send more! - DE 🌐

Reaching *from p. 1*

student standing before them. For them, the need to hide differences takes precedence over truth or depth in conversation. Pretending agreement is better than embarrassing oneself or another person.

Cultural nuances like these can make witnessing across cultural divides feel impossible. We want to obey Christ's command to take the gospel to people very different from ourselves. How can we do it?

In six years living in Japan I grew to appreciate how distinct the Japanese way of relating was from ours as Americans. Engaging people's hearts with the gospel has required inward preparation plus time and thought to build relationships of respect and remarkable love across which this foreign idea—the gospel—can cross. Diligently applying these principles can help any Christian be an effective cross-cultural witness.

Preparing Inwardly

To be a conduit of truth to others, I must first saturate my mind with the Bible. When I read the gospels, I find a model in Jesus as he initiates conversation with people from all backgrounds. Paul's evangelistic fervor in his letters sparks my heart for mission. Seeing God's power and love in scripture fuels my tank. Only then can I move past empty fear and self-interest to share the good news of Jesus.

Prayer is pivotal also. A team of praying people can change hard clay to soft loam. Through email and a church class I enlisted many to pray for specific needs while we lived in Japan. Taking 5-15 minutes to send prayer requests is a way we express our dependence on God and let others share the joy of seeing God answer.

God works when we join together in prayer. Because people prayed for Naoko, a friend in Tokyo, before our visit there last year, she asked questions about the gospel and seemed receptive instead of indifferent as before.

The evil one attempts to dishearten us from witness, but praying throughout the day can frustrate his aims. As I flew to Japan last summer, doubts assaulted me. I wondered if gifts I had brought—beef jerky, small towels, nuts, dried fruit—would seem cheap-looking, boring. Would I offend Japanese friends with American directness? "God, help me!" I prayed. Then a thought came, from God I believe, "These are darts from Satan, meant to burn up your confidence in serving God." My confidence re-

turned as I prayed from Eph. 6.

Building Relationships

Taking time to drink tea or coffee together and build a relationship is vital. We always



Japan - Tea ceremony

speak into a context. When relating cross-culturally, we don't know the doubts that fill people's minds. And by getting to know us, people discover who we are and understand some of what we believe.

I first moved to Kobe shortly after the Aum Shinrikyo attack in which members of a new religious cult killed seven subway riders and injured many others with poison gas. Until Kobe residents knew me, they could not distinguish my faith from the cult's faith! Until trust was built through relationship, they had no interest.

Relationship building creates a climate conducive to questions. Since Japanese are very reluctant to offend or intrude, they rarely ask personal or spiritual questions until well acquainted. When a doctor friend asked our opinion about blood transfusions, it showed his trust and hope that we differed from Jehovah Witnesses who forbid them. This relationship was built through our families enjoying food and fun together over the years.

Showing a Remarkable Love

We need to pray and look for remarkable ways to show love. Acts of love that run counter to the culture cause people to notice and melt icy hearts. Such love can be acts of radical servanthood, generosity or gracious, Biblical response to conflict.

In our last year in Kobe four people became seriously interested in the gospel and joined us for home bible study. The cause for their interest appeared to be a conflict with them. I had become angry, but then talked about why, forgave them and apologized for my part. Resolving conflict openly is rarely done in Japan. Japanese typically pretend there's no conflict, express their conflict through a third-party, withdraw, or explode and never reconcile. So acting biblically and counter-culturally was powerful.

Knowing that conflicts can be avenues down which God's grace parades helps change my attitude from grouchiness to curious trust. When problems arise, I wonder, "What is God up to now? How can I show undeserved kindness?"

Respect Requires Attention

In Japan, showing respect, so important in all Asian cultures, requires a different skill than Americans are familiar with—*attention to details*.

Most Japanese learn to carefully control facial expression and body movement to avoid expressing disagreement. Also, not understanding what's said and showing it would be so embarrassing. Minute facial changes like narrowing eyes or tightening lips have meanings that won't be expressed with more dramatic signals to which Americans are accustomed.

When we miss these signals, we are seen as disrespectful—in our terms, as pushy or insensitive. Noticing and interpreting what's behind the outer face of a Japanese person can be learned by those who care and pay attention.



Great Buddha at Kamakura

Reflection Informs Relationships

Reflecting also aids love and communication. When I first arrived in Tokyo, I just talked and couldn't tell when people didn't understand, agree or want to listen. Later I could sense something was wrong but couldn't understand it. Prayer, reading about the culture and learning from folks experienced in Japanese culture brought understanding.

Such reflection earned the respect of my neighbor-friend and English student, Mizutasan. Feeling I had to ease my schedule to prepare to leave Japan in 3 months, I decided to end a children's English class abruptly in mid-December.

When I announced that next week's class would be the last, I noticed Mizutasan's troubled face. "Ohhh, Mizutasan thinks ending with the next class is bad. What's wrong? Ohh... Japanese people almost always end things with a goodbye party."

Continued next page

Reaching

from page 7

Mizutasan could not express her dismay to me directly without being pushy by her standards.

After reflection and prayer I decided Jesus wanted me to give a goodbye party. Reflection helped me to tailor expressions of love to Japanese sensibilities, and so Mizutasan's interest in the gospel grew.

Taking Time to Explain

The gospel has to be thoughtfully explained to those from a far different background. Using the same clichés and gospel tracts with Japanese as with Americans will earn polite interest but not understanding or heart engagement.

Once we took my Kojimasan to hear Billy Graham in Tokyo. The message was superb, compelling to someone who understood God, sin, etc. But phrases like "washed in the blood of Jesus" sound like gross monstrosities to unschooled people. Though translated into impeccable Japanese, it was incomprehensible to our friend.

To a typical Japanese "God" is one of 50 gods who live at various shrines with whom people can bargain by bringing gifts. Where the culture is so different, most people cannot immediately take in the gospel and repent. In ensuing discussions, Kojimasan could hear one point at a time and ask her questions. Slowly, over a six-year period, she came to faith.

Bridging the cultural, religious and language divide is not quick or easy. Love expresses itself in prayer, respect, reflection, attention to detail, taking time to build and persist in relationships while finding remarkable ways to show love. All my efforts have been paid back more than double. The generosity and sensitivity of Japanese friends has been awesome. Better yet is the joy of seeing someone come to possess eternal hope. You can be part of this process of bringing someone from darkness and despair to light and joy. — Carol Park 🌐

Carol Park moved to Japan with her husband and two- and four-year-old daughters in 1993 to serve as tentmakers. Her husband worked as a computer engineer at HP Japan and Carol used her MA in TEFL to teach private English classes with a gospel component. Through friendships and having children in Japanese schools, she saw a part of Japan few foreigners see. Their six years in Japan gave much cause for celebration: their own growth, growth in Japanese Christians, and three women friends

Tentmaker Mailbag

Afghanistan: A mission leader who previously attended GO's Light to the Nations, is going into Afghanistan regularly to aid with some desperately needed small business development. Recently he emailed from there: "All has gone extremely well in Herat with much accomplished. 35 widows are employed making quilts! Awesome!" He is bringing home a sample quilt, the first one made. He has lined up one possible organization to purchase a large quantity of quilts for distribution to needy Afghans outside Herat. This would be a huge blessing and provide income to the widows and quilts to Afghans against the bitter cold. Winter is here and many will freeze to death. One quilt can make the difference between life and death.

Morocco: A couple that attended our Light to the Nations in 2001 is part of a team developing a residential school for orphaned children called the Village of Hope. S. writes, "Well, with this week's cool weather and 3 days of rain, you would never think we are

on the same continent as the great Sahara! After several weeks of very cold, quick showers, we got hot water! We were so excited to finally be able to wash dishes without having to boil the tea-kettle first. And, after over a year of waiting, the Village of Hope actually has ELECTRICITY!" The team was so excited they invited 30 neighbors over for a big dinner. "We are learning to read cultural cues, and some cultural "landmines," some of which we've already stepped on!"

Bosnia: Another Light to the Nations couple (more traditional missionaries) is planting a church with a team. Though they have had some setbacks, people are coming to Christ regularly and the church is progressing. They have just selected deacons in the church. "We tried to use the example from Acts 6. Several of us prayerfully made a list of those we felt met the qualifications for deacons and submitted it to the fellowship, which voted last Sunday. We now have two deacons and two deaconesses, and



two alternates in case one of the others is unable to serve."

China: A tentmaker heading to China writes, "We have been asked to take a position in Shanghai with my company starting late January, 2003. We've had invitations before that did not work out, so we waited until we received the offer in writing before we let ourselves get excited. Now, we are excited! Like cold water to a weary soul is good news from a distant land.' Prov. 25:25. T. and I will be traveling Nov. 3-9 to Shanghai to make arrangements for schools and housing. There are some difficulties in finding a school for the kids in Shanghai. Also, this is a big change for them, so finding the right housing could help a lot. We would appreciate prayer for both of these. Additionally, we're finding how much there is to do when you move to the other side of the world." 🌐

Join the Action!

Give Strategically!

Given strategically, your money can make a real difference and bring joyful alignment with Jesus' heart. Jesus said, "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you **friends**, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (Jn. 15:15) And what is he doing? "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached . . . to all nations; and then the end will come." (Mt. 24:14) Give generously, sacrificially to strategic mission work.

Pray Regularly.

Get information and pray regularly for other peoples to hear of Jesus' love and surrender to him. You may want to focus on Muslims during Ramadan, Nov. 6 - Dec. 5. For a great 30-day guide see www.wam.org/prayer/muslim/2002/default.htm. Another *excellent* resource is Operation World which gives a brief write-up of every nation. To buy a CD-ROM version see www.gmi.org/ow/. This also links to a daily prayer guide and to online "prayer publications" for missions news, many by email.

GO?!

Revelation tells us how history ends. God accomplishes his goal and redeems people for himself "from every tribe and tongue and people and nation." (Rev. 5:9) God has given us each a unique mix of gifts, training, skills, and passions which he wants to use to make a difference in the world. We don't have to switch to a religious profession. We simply need to make ourselves fully available to him to use anywhere he leads, beginning here and now. How about telling God, "I am available anywhere you lead beginning right here." Then keep looking and learning how your uniqueness can serve the world's great need.

Help GO Mobilize!

Has God given you a desire to motivate other's for tentmaking? To help them see the world's need? How about becoming a tentmaker mobilizer in your church and even in your city? How about organizing or hosting a tentmaking seminar in your church? Or another church? Or a group of churches? For more information, contact aj@globalopps.org.