

## *My trip to Heqing*

*Ivy Yan*

On the eve before leaving Canada, I was in a ‘panic’ mode. I asked myself this question: Are you ready to do His work? I was not sure exactly what to do, what lectures to give, I really did not know the teaching methodology to be used and I had never met my team mates. So many questions went through my mind that I was not able to sleep.... Then I heard Him say: ‘My child, my grace is sufficient for you’. I also remembered how Abraham followed God’s instruction by faith and just packed and left his hometown. I told myself: I should do the same. When would I learn to truly cast all my burdens on Him?



We arrived safe and sound in this beautiful town called Heqing, meaning ‘celebration of cranes’. We were tired, but excited. During our stay in Heqing, the officials treated us to official dinners. They visited us in the evenings and brought us bags of fresh fruits. Our students, English teachers of the local middle schools, were all eager to learn English. Right from day 1, we challenged them to speak in English at all times—“No Chinese!” And they gracefully accepted this challenge. They demonstrated their respect and hospitality to us by taking us out to the local markets, and to visit their own homes and local attractions. During classes, we had fun together: we sang songs together and practiced English together. The teachers learned some teaching skills and techniques from us and we learned a lot more from them. We learned how tough it was to be an educator in China. Teachers generally work 6 days week, from 7:00 am to 9:30 pm. Some of their students could not afford to go to school and these admirable teachers willingly supported them financially. Even though the teachers lack resources, facilities and equipment, they truly had a heart for their students and would be willing to do their utmost to devote themselves to educating the youngsters of the country. I feel that these teachers deserve our highest respect and admiration.

We were invited to visit the middle schools on Saturdays. These were probably some of the most enjoyable visits I had—to be able to actually talk to the youngsters. During those visits we had an opportunity to encourage the young people to learn English well. I told them how important it was for the future generations of Chinese to be able to communicate with the rest of the world. When I looked at these young and earnest faces, I thanked the Lord for giving me this chance to be able to do something small for the benefit of both China and her people.



The streets of Heqing were surprisingly clean, and its people were extremely friendly. Even the little girl in the hotel had been so helpful. On our last day, I tried to show my appreciation for her help by giving her a bit of money. She turned it down firmly. I felt ashamed. She did not say too much, but I felt her pride, her friendliness and her willingness to help.



On Sundays we had worship with the long-term doctors in Heqing. We came to know them and their families. I also saw how they have given up their own comfortable lives in their own homelands and come to China, simply because of the love and compassion they had for our Lord and the people in Heqing. Even the officials in the county recognized their love and their devotion.

I have never felt so proud to have a ‘triple identity’—that I was born a Chinese, became a Canadian through naturalization and, most of all, became a Christian by God’s grace. I thank Him for giving me this chance not only to help the Chinese people but also to glorify Him. I pray to our God that He will keep these

beautiful people in Him and that He will give these people a chance to get to know Him and have a relationship with Him. That would be my prayer.

*~Ivy Yan is a Senior Consultant of an Information Technology firm in Whitby, Ontario.*

The Heqing English teaching team (from left to right): Faith Ng, Kallen Fong, Steve Wat, Hieu Ho and Ivy Yan



## Miracles

## Steve Wat

Miracles! Wow, when asked to reflect on this summer 2004 MSI China trip, I balked at the realization that the magnitude of the task stood at almost ridiculous proportions.

What an experience! The impression it left on my heart almost feels physical, dented by all that it absorbed in a month. But if any, the one word that I’d choose to describe it would be “miracles!” God was at work and His grace was abundant. From teaching English without a hitch to the flourishing friendships we enjoyed, they were all far too ‘perfect’ to not be supernaturally empowered.

God was teaching me about love. True love is like Jesus' love. True love is only from God, and true love always must lead to God. God must be always at the center of everything we do—relationships, friendships, ministry. When Jesus loved someone, it always led them to God. I asked my friends before the trip to pray that God would place a love in my heart for the Chinese people. I know that He accepted their prayers and returned it tenfold. Some of the people we met are searching for meaning in life, some are caught in hardship, and some only believe in themselves. I felt so deeply for these people; it's really quite indescribable. I wanted them to have so much more.

We had planned a field trip and the weather was perfect, even though the rest of the week was all rainy. We first walked through the rice fields (I caught a little tree frog!), then through a small village (escorted most of the way by some kind pigs), and then up a mountain cemetery to arrive at the 'morning mist temple'. It was a picturesque little temple where we rested for a while and were served tea by an old Chinese man (he was the one who took care of the temple). They were in the process of renovating and new Buddhas were being built out of mud and hay. Squatter even commented, "I think it's funny how people build gods. They are only man made, but then in a couple of months, people will come and bow to them, pray and give money, expecting them to hear." His point was valid and illustrated the sentiment that many of the younger generation hold. Where then can they find comfort when





life asks for meaning, or when things are out of control, when there are no solid assurances, when the future is a foreboding obscurity? ... They have no one but themselves.



And there it is. I am back in Calgary now, so I guess this concludes our journey to China and the miracles that we saw happen. There, I have seen God at work, clearer than ever. I am more convinced at the reality of His presence in our lives, at the personality in our relationship with Him. I am even more motivated to live a meaningful and eternally valuable life—to live as a pilgrim in this world and yearn heavenward with all of me. I can summarize this trip in a sentence: Our God is a good God, omnipresent, all knowing, all powerful, a transcendence beyond our universe who loves us personally, deeply and perfectly.

*~Steve Wat is a final year student at the University of Alberta.*

## **The one apple seed**

*John K. Wu, MD*

Flying over the mountainous terrain of Sichuan before landing the plane landed brought a special sense of anticipation for me. I have always thought that I have very little to offer on a MSI trip being a specialist in Pediatric Hematology. I have not “intubated” a neonate in years and not performed CPR for decades. However, when Dr. Po Kee Cheung introduced me to Professor Victor Yu, the leader of the Australian MSI team, I was very encouraged to join. Not only was it an academic team whose work was giving lectures to the medical staff, it was also to last for only one week. I thought, even with my incompetence, how bad can I mess things up in one week?



As the plane landed at the Chongqing airport, being towed slowly into the gate because its front steering gear was broken, I again pondered on the Lord’s providence. Not really realizing it, I had actually heard of Professor Victor Yu since my high school days in Hong Kong. He was the handsome young doctor dating our favorite geography teacher, Miss Winnie Wong. Little did I know that they were not only fellow Christians, but that I would, one day, be in the same team with them after almost 35 years! The Lord very kindly provided me with wonderful team members Drs. Genevieve Fung, Peter Chow, Douglas Bernhart and Estherie Tung who worked, shared and laughed together seamlessly.

Our objective was to give lectures to the medical staff of the Neonatology, Hematology and Surgery departments of the Chongqing Children’s Hospital. We had a warm and wonderful reception from the staff of our host institution mainly because of warm friendships built up on the previous three trips. They told us that they were impressed by our “volunteering and patriotic spirit”—using our own vacation time and having paid our own way to come for their benefit. Very soon, we realized that we have

to be quite flexible because not only were the timing of our talks changed, but the audience also changed. I had the opportunity to go on ward rounds with one of the hematologists, and had an informal talk with the residents. My handicapped Mandarin was a hindrance, but they were very gracious and I made it up by supplementing heavily with English.

We reserved our last day for a “local tour”. We divided ourselves into two groups hoping to have some “personal” time with some members of the staff. I have to admit that, after a few days there with the inability to openly share our faith brought with it a touch of discouragement. Winnie shared hers and Victor’s experience in establishing the St. Matthias Church in Melbourne at a time when there was a great need for outreach to the Indochina refugees. A fellow Christian encouraged her with a saying: “Only God can count the apples in one seed”. It then dawned on me that what God asks of me is to be an obedient and free-flowing channel. His grace and blessings will flow “in His time”.



---

*~Dr. John Wu is a Pediatric Hematologist-Oncologist at BC Children’s Hospital. He is also the Secretary of the MSI Canada Board of Directors.*

### **A Message from Dr. Po Kee Cheung**

It is my great honour to introduce our next Executive Director of MSI Canada, Dr. Wendy Cheung. Dr. Cheung originally came from Hong Kong. After obtaining her medical degree from the University of Hong Kong, she came to Canada for specialty training in Pediatrics. She is now on staff at McMaster Children’s Hospital in Hamilton as consultant pediatrician.

Dr. Cheung has been joining MSI Canada short-term medical teams since 1998. She has been to Luquan in Yunnan province, as well as Gulin and Luzhou in Sichuan province several times. She is well respected in the local hospital where MSI Canada serves in Gulin. Her dedication and love for the children in China flow very naturally from her. Everywhere she went in the hospital, she was followed by lots of kids waiting to be around her. The love of Christ definitely was manifested through her servant attitude and eagerness to relieve sick children of suffering and counsel parents. We are very proud that Dr. Cheung will take over as Executive Director of MSI Canada as of January 1, 2005. Please pray for her as she takes on this leadership role.



MSI Canada  
Website: [www.msicanada.org](http://www.msicanada.org)  
Address: 128 Cornwall Road, Sherwood Park, Alberta, T8H 2L4  
Phone/Fax: (780) 417-4753

Email address: [msicanada@yahoo.com](mailto:msicanada@yahoo.com)  
HQ Website: [www.msips.org](http://www.msips.org)