

MSI Canada Newsletter



Annual Retreat's Messages by Rev. Jamie Taylor Missional Challenges of the 21st Century

Rev. Taylor kicked off the 2010 MSI Canada Annual Retreat in June in Toronto with a passage from the

Gospel of John 9:4, "As long as it is day, we must do the work of Him who has sent me. Night is coming when we can no longer work".

This is the biblical foundation of Rev. Taylor's view on the missional challenges of the 21st century. Seven aspects of mission works are highlighted in this passage :

- **Partnership**, through the word "we"
- **Necessity**, through the word "must"
- **Urgency**, through the words "night is coming when we can no longer work"
- **Missional**, through the words "do the work of Him who has sent me". As Jesus was sent by God into this world, Jesus also sends us to do the work.
- **Salvation and Transformational**. The context of the passage talks about a man born blind but now he can see.
- **Witness**, as the man can see again. John Newton's song "Amazing Grace" also captures this picture - "...was blind but now I see...".

The 7 Key Challenges are:

1. **Challenges of the Unreached** - two third of the world population are in 10/40 window.

2. Challenge of CAN (Creative Access Nations) - there are places where Christian can serve through creative approaches e.g. bi-vocational, etc.

3. Challenge of Urbanization - as nowadays there are more population in the world live in the cities than in the suburbs. For example, there are 300 million migrant workers in China.

4. Challenge of Diaspora - there are many diaspora people around the world. It may be easier to reach out to certain ethnic groups outside their own country than in their homeland.

5. Challenge of a Holistic Ministry - we should consider serving to fulfill whatever kind of needs there are in the society.

6. Challenge of Long-Term Missions - we can serve as short-term worker going to the same place every year with long term vision in order to be an effective help for that place.

7. Challenge of a Cross Cultural Mission - we should be awaken to cross-cultural mission work near our home.

Urbanization

Rev. Taylor pointed out that urbanization faces six areas of challenges: *Resources, Social, Environment, Economic, Family and Individuals*.

Rev. Taylor encouraged us to rethink the requirements of urbanization work in 21st century. Churches need to re-plan and even re-tool to better equip for this kind of ministry. God has brought the mission fields to our door-step. Rev. Taylor challenged us to think about the countries that are rapidly changing through urbanization. Countries such as China. Examples of evangelism works in these rapidly changing countries are education related works; social services like counseling care, child care, care for elderly; and others, etc.

Partnering with Chinese Nationals

Rev. Taylor encouraged Christians to have a wider context of looking into partnering with the nationals around the world in order to promote indigenous movements in the Kingdom works. MSI has been focusing on partnering with Chinese nationals for many years. To deepen the root of the partnership, MSI has also started to partner with local Chinese leaders and members.

Rev. Taylor closed the retreat by reminding us of a quote from his great great grandfather, James Hudson Taylor,

The Great Commission is not an option to be considered, but a command to be obeyed.

(Transcribed by Wichai Tumtaweetikul)

"To be living witnesses among the youth of Zhaojue, showing God's love to them while teaching English"

This was the objective of the English Camp at the Zhaojue Youth Centre (YC) back in July 2010. The objective was not only met, it was exceeded by far more than the team had ever imagined! This year, the curriculum had been carefully prepared in advance to have all of the students learning the same themes each day. This created a unity between the students and the teachers. Everyone was able to discuss with one another after classes about what they had learnt. By using multi-media, songs, drama, crafts, games and written material that were all connected to the daily theme, the students were able to learn from a variety of methods and the themes were reinforced during each activity. Each teacher was able to alter the material a little to make it more personal. Our whole team experienced the transformation amongst the student. It was truly a rewarding experience for all involved.

The on-site accommodations and classrooms were very functional this year. It was a pleasure to come back to our comfortable Western style accommodation after a long day of teaching. The teaching was made effective with lots of classroom space available; musical instruments to use; audio visual technology to enhance lessons; sports equipment and a perfect field to play on; and access to a photocopier to make copies of the lessons. Our team brought along the majority of the teaching materials that were needed so that we did not need to go searching around town for them. This significantly saved time and reduced stress while we were there. Every night our team would meet to discuss logistics for the next day. This enabled each team member to feel equipped to teach even if some of them had no prior teaching

experience. This is an important point to remember when the majority of people on the team are not trained teaching professionals. Every morning we also met as a team for a time of singing, sharing and prayer to start the day off right. We had grown closer to one another through these sharing and prayer times; thus resulting in team unity. We really enjoyed this part of the day even though some of us would have loved to sleep a little longer.

Our local hosts were a real blessing to each of us. They were always there to help and to serve. We enjoyed our time with them in their homes for dinner, on prayer walks around the city, during Sunday services with them and the many short meetings on site. We hope that we were a blessing to them as well.

This year we were blessed with a very strong team with many talents. We had several musicians who led us in songs each day. We had people who were great at organizing games, creating crafts, and teaching drama. Everyone was able to develop good relationship with the students. Every team member had something to add to the strength of the team. It was awesome to see how God had assembled such a great team. Since we had a very strong Mandarin speaking team, some of the local Chinese assistants sometimes felt that they were not very useful. We tried to change this by having them prepare morning dramas to share with the whole assembly during the third week. We also purposely got them participate in the daily lessons. At times it seemed as if we had too many teachers (3 in every classroom of 25 students). But when our team was hit by a flu bug and nearly everyone spent a day or two being sick, it was perfect to have the extra help around.

One day our family was invited to go to two of our students' home for dinner. We accepted and also extended the invitation to two others on the team who are fluent in Mandarin in order to interpret for us.

When we arrived at the students' home, we found out that they had invited many more of their family members and friends. We had a great evening with piles of food. We took many photographs when our students came out dressed in their traditional Yi outfits. A highlight was when we were told the teams that had come to the YC are making a positive impact on the people in the city. This was amazing to hear and was great to know that the work are well received.

There were a few challenges during this trip such as team building and travel logistics of a large team, different expectation on how things should be done. Nonetheless these challenges were a small price to pay. We witnessed growth in some of the students and the local Chinese assistants. We also witnessed several of our team members had significantly matured in their faith through this experience. As leaders, we were blessed by working with each and everyone that the Lord had chosen to bring together as a team. We were also blessed by our local hosts and encouraged by their commitment to the Yi people. We were definitely touched by the students and parents that we encountered each day and how they treated our family. Most of all we were privileged to see the Lord at work in China and excited to play a small part in spreading His love to the youth in Zhaojue while teaching them English.

(Written by Daniel and Delia Reitsma)



**Daniel, Delia,
Karianne, Michaela, and Rachel**

Face to Face with Grace

In autumn 2010, a team of five travelled 30 hours to LuZhou to teach 30 college students some business & language skills for the hospitality industry. We might've thought we'd put a lot of thought into our teaching. But our work was more like the basket of fish and loaves under His power.



What did we learn about the students' lives?

We learned about the mainstream mindset that they had internalized. Many felt like failures to their parents for not succeeding academically. Many felt they already "lost face" from being "poor students". One said she liked to dance since it allowed her to forget that she was a loser.

Most were from small towns nearby. Some had never travelled, nor owned a computer, nor been to McDonald's. Many had been raised by grandparents, miles away from parents. At school, they adapted with much less than we're used to – living in small dorm rooms for 6-8 people, having limited internet access, and carrying hot water from another building to meet daily needs.

What did we learn about the students' hearts?

From our time with them, we saw heartfelt hospitality, resourcefulness and generosity, courage, responsiveness and vulnerability.

Hospitality... They anticipated and responded to our practical needs everyday.

Resourcefulness and generosity ... We organized a party for them, and many had never experienced one before. But they came and did all they could to help us set up the event that was for them. Later, they organized a thank-you party that was more touching than any one we had ever experienced.

Courage ... At first, many needed to write things down before speaking, or were too shy for face-to-face conversations. One never spoke, interacted or smiled in class, and didn't know as much English, yet tried to take on a difficult project topic. But she and many others opened up after receiving encouragement.

Responsiveness and vulnerability ... One teacher said, "(We) can tell from the students they're so happy when they take the course. We can tell they're tired, but they want to be in the classroom, because they don't want to miss anything. Thank

you for your skills and experience, but above all, thank you for your love. We feel that." We had taught them the MSI song on love, based on 1 Cor. 13. On our last day, they too sang a song about love, and lined the gates echoing the 1 Cor. 13 song as we left. It's hard to forget their faces of appreciation. We felt a grace and love from them that we didn't earn.

It may have led us to wonder – how often are we that vulnerably responsive to God's love and grace?

I think we learned something about God's heart in LuZhou. He showed us a contrast between losing face and seeing grace, a contrast between "poorness" in the world's eyes and "poorness of spirit". We realized we'd received more than we gave, and the students realized a different way of seeing themselves than they'd been used to believing. In the end, we learned that God multiplies love that's shared & received, and the reverberations are His work & grace, not ours. We can only recognize our need for more of it.

He showed us something about His hospitality. God said, "Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink – even if you have no money! ...For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts. ...The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry. It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it." (Isaiah 55: 1, 9-11 – NLT) ...Praying that wherever He may have us, that we may seek His face, marvel at His ways, and see His word at work.

"Turn your eyes upon Jesus... Look full in His wonderful face... And the things on earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace."



Written by Melodie Chan (pictured above at front row 1st right); on behalf of the LuZhou team – (pictured at front row from left to right) Simon Tam, Poh Bin Ng, Eric Ma, & Julia Hui

Upcoming MSI Canada Events

- February, 25-27, 2011 MissionsFest Alberta
- March 5, 2011 Rev. Jamie Taylor visiting Vancouver and Sharing at the MSI Vancouver Meeting
- March 10-18 Yunnan Vision Trip. There are two participants from Toronto and one from Vancouver
- March 11-13, 2011 HarvestFest Saskatoon
- April 1-3, 2011 MissionFest Toronto
- June 3-5, 2011 MSI Canada Annual Retreat in Edmonton

For additional information about these events, please contact us at:

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The Changing China, The Unchanged Gospel 百变的中国,不变的福音

Date: June 3 Friday 6pm till Sunday 2:30pm

Keynote Speaker: Joshua Kim

Location: Providence Renewal Center, Edmonton, 3005 – 119 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Accommodation: For the out of town guests, we will arrange accommodation among MSI supports and alumni. However, if you prefer other type of accommodation or if you have your own accommodation, please let us know.

For registration, please contact:

For Alberta & Saskatchewan: Charles Chan – cfkchan@telus.net

For British Columbia: Wichai Tumtaweeetikul – mobilization@msicanada.org

For Ontario: Walter Chu – walterchu77@gmail.com

The final day of registration is May 15, 2011