

VIGNETTES FROM CHINA (True Tales from Two Tourists)

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1. Granddaughter of Christiana, daughter of Communists, she was introduced to a living faith in Christ while doing a post-graduate course in the West last year. On returning home, with trepidation she shared her new-found faith with her husband, then her student son and schoolgirl daughter. Now they are a believing family, praying and worshipping together daily in their home, concerned to share their new-found Saviour with relatives and friends. God is very much alive in their city.
2. A member of one of the largest minority Muslim groups in China, he lectures in a medical college. He was one of the “sons (and daughters) of peace” (Luke 10:5,6) whom we met on our travels – spiritually receptive – a man of peace ready to welcome the Prince of Peace or at least His messengers. While the plane was delayed in take-off by a technical hitch, he was using his time to improve his English. He went through the photographs and pictures in my companion’s copy of Mildred Cable’s *The Gobi Desert*, reading the English captions and telling us the Uygar translation of various words. We wrote a designer tract for him using three Arabic words familiar to him – God is love, light and peace. The Uygar script is similar to the Arabic and some of the terminology is the same.
3. We met a Christian brother in a Chinese version of the “street called straight” and he answered our enquiry about which wayside café to visit where we might meet Muslim friends. The café owner responded to our Arabic greeting and wished us peace. He belonged to the largest Muslim minority group, called the Hui, who have spread over many parts of the country. He enquired if we were Muslims. We indicated that we worship one God and follow the prophet Isa (Jesus). He did not stock *nan* (unleavened bread) and *kebab* in his restaurant so he went with me down the street to help me buy bread and up the street to buy kebabs. After this, his wife poured water over our hands and we sat down to drink tea with our bread and meat. Then he presented us with large bowls of steaming soup. We said grace, raising our hands in prayer, wishing to be known as people of God in a land which questioned and often denied His existence. Our host, a poor man, refused payment for the soup and tea and use of his café. Eventually I persuaded him to take the equivalent of a few pence. We returned another time and received the same gracious treatment from him, his wife and sons who also work in the family business. How does one share about the Saviour prophet who has made peace with God for us all if one does not speak their language? I asked our Christian brother to deliver two very important messages to the café owner and his family. First, thanks for the gracious welcome and hospitality in the name of God, and secondly, the good news about Isa (Jesus) the Messiah – the Word made flesh.

Postscript

As I was going by ferry from Hong Kong island to Kowloon, a Chinese fellow-passenger started to talk to me. He lectured in electronics in Beijing. On hearing that I was a teacher he tried to recruit me to teach English in a Chinese university, pointing out the many job-opportunities for teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Our conversation was entirely on academic matters. I don’t know his personal philosophy or belief and he doesn’t know mine. I think it would not affect the invitation to teach in one of the many universities or colleges. Trust-filled relationships would later bring opportunities to share the deeper insights and concerns of life.