

“...you will fill me with joy in your presence.”

Psalms 16:11

“Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are *filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy*, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” 1 Peter 1:8-9

Summer 2006
Newsletter

Inside: “Why We Still Take Bibles to China”
Answering the argument that China has all the Bibles they need.

Jesus prayed that his disciples would be filled with joy. Joy then would be an indication of a ‘healthy’ disciple.

The Bible says joy comes “in the presence of the Lord.” Ps. 16:11 Of course that depends on the condition of a persons heart as to whether they embrace Gods presence or react to it with fear, anger, guilt, or religion. Jesus prayed that his disciples would “have the full measure of his joy in them.” John 17:13

Now the question is what is joy and why is it so important?

Joy

- Noun** 1. The emotion of great happiness.
2. Something or someone that provides pleasure; a source of happiness; "a joy to behold"; "the pleasure of his company"; "the new car is a delight".
- Verb** 1. Feel happiness or joy. 2. Make glad or happy.

While I don't like to focus on emotions, I realize that everyone is always in some sort of an emotional state of being. For many, emotions are the main motivating force in their life, but for a Christian, a combination of both love for God and obedience to His word should be our motivation. But regardless of how we understand this with our head, we are constantly under the influence of circumstances which all too often rule our emotions and how we respond to God's word.

Jesus desire is that his disciples be people filled with joy. And not just any joy, but the with the full measure of His joy.

Are you filled with joy? If so, what is the source of your joy? And if you don't have His joy, what are you filled with? Joy in some thing material or an accomplishment? Or are you filled with stress? Worry? Fear? Anger? Frustration? Regret? Pride? Grief? Religiosity? Some or all the above at one time or another?

What was the source of Jesus' joy and how can we get it?

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." John 15:9-13

As Jesus found joy out of love and obedience, likewise we will find joy when we, out of love, are obedient to whatever God requires of us.

"You have made know to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand". Psalms 16:11

"Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." Nehemiah 8:10

Is your life filled with the joy of the presence of God? Is His joy the emotional strength that carries you through the circumstances life throws at you? Jesus prayer is that you will be filled with His joy!

June Bible Courier Team
Beijing and Hong Kong



Go Forth Ministry has led two teams this year to carry much needed Bibles into China to help meet the needs of the underground churches there.

Getting God's Word to people who are praying and waiting for it remains Go Forth Ministry's main focus! Contrary to what some large organizations are reporting, millions of Christians in China still do not have access to Bibles.

March Bible Courier Team
Vietnam and Hong Kong



Hello,

My name is Annette Steiner and I recently went to China for two weeks to help bring Bibles for the underground churches there. My experience has been a journey that I will never forget. First I felt God calling me to China a little more than a month before the trip and I thought that He was crazy. I had no idea why He wanted me to go to China. But I listened and obeyed. During and after the trip I thank God so much for telling me to go on this trip. God was able to work on my heart while I was in China. He showed me many things through his Word and through other people that would change my heart and my direction for my life.

Our little team carried 720lbs of Bibles into Beijing from the USA. We spent a few days in Beijing and then traveled to Hong Kong where we did more courier work. It is a wonderful experience to be taking God's word to people who are so thirsty for it. I'll share with you my first trip and how God revealed to me that it is His

power that gets His word across the border.

In Hong Kong we had a briefing before we took our first trip and it was explained what to do during a border crossing. I was a little nervous but pretty confident at the same time. I was praying continually and God was giving me assurance that I was going to make it through just fine as we began our journey. After getting my passport stamped, I walked past the scanner and some of the Chinese customs officers. I thought that I was making it through just fine when suddenly a customs officer stepped in front of me and asked for my passport. So I gave it to him and he pointed to the scanner. I was thinking "Oh no, I'm not going to get through my first time". As instructed I turned around and walked over to put my luggage on the scanner. As I was walking over I was praying to God to help me get these Bibles through. I felt God leading me to put my bag on a certain way on the scanner.

Now at first thought I was thinking no matter how I put my bag on they are still going to be able to see what is inside. But I listened and put it on the way He told me to. Having done that I walked to the end of the scanner, grabbed my bag and walked over to the officer. He handed me my passport and I simply walked out of the building. Wow, what a feeling!

After speaking with my team leader he told me that was a miracle because the customs officer knew what I was doing since he had taken my passport before I put my bag on the scanner. Who knows what they saw on the scanner. But I listened and obeyed God on what he was telling me to do and He got me through. That was a huge faith builder for me! There are other stories that I would like to share but I want to express how much God changed my heart and why carrying Bibles into China is so important.



Packing Bibles for couriers to take to China

During the two weeks that I was gone I felt God changing me. I felt God leading me to change my life so that I was devoting ALL my life to him and his works. God reminded me through his Word that we are here for just a short period of time and that the time here should be for building his kingdom and glorifying him. That is also what our daily lives should always be reflecting. I know God has a plan for me and my husband. I don't know if that plan is to take us back to China, to some other place in this world, or to leave us here to serve him. Whatever the plan is, we are going with an open and willing heart.

Going to China to deliver Bibles is so important. There are millions of Christians that have been saved but have no Bible to read and be able to grow as a Christian. God's word is so important to have to be able to grow and mature in the faith. Many Chinese Christians can't go out and buy a Bible. They have to rely on us to bring it to them. That's why these trips are SO important. The demand for Bibles is huge. While we were there the office was getting calls and orders for 20-30 thousand Bibles at a time just to fill the present need. That could take up to 6 months to fulfill those orders. That's why they need more people to come and to be couriers to take Bibles into China. It's very fulfilling and powerful to be taking God's word to people who are so thirsty for it and to feel God at work as he gets His Bibles across the border. Please pray about this and if you feel God leading you to go on a Bible Courier trip take the step of faith and do it. It is a wonderful experience!

In His Name,

Annette Steiner

Why we still take "But China has all the Bibles they need" Bibles to China

While some organizations report that China has all the Bibles the Christians in that country of 1.3 billion souls need, we need to understand that the source for these reports originating from China do not include in their accounting the Christians in the 'underground' or unregistered churches. In fact, though they acknowledge the existence of unregistered 'congregations', Amity News Service posted a July 6, 2006 article entitled "How to Count the Number of Christians in China" the following:

*"Finally: Who should be counted as a Chinese Christian? Due to the lack of ordained pastors, in many rural areas less than 50% of the regular churchgoers are baptized. Should those who have not been baptized be counted? Similarly, there are many groups who use the name Christian but have limited understanding of the Christian faith, such as those who have only heard that prayer in the name of Jesus heals the sick. Should they be counted as Christians, or should one wait until they have a better knowledge of what Christian faith entails? Such problems of definition mean that any statistics must be used with care."*¹

According to the statistics of the 'China Christian Counsel', as of their latest estimate in 2004, there were 18,017,750 registered Protestant Christians in China. This figure does not include an estimated 4,000,000 registered Catholics and certainly both these numbers need to be increased to meet the current 2006 figures. Amity Press, in partnership with the United Bible Society, reported in November 2005:

*"...between 1988 and 2005, 47 million copies of the Bible and New Testament were printed, of which, 37.5 million were for distribution within China and 9.5 million for export."*²

In January 2006, Amity Press celebrated the printing of the 40 millionth Bible for the Christians in China. This is a wonderful accomplishment for which we praise the Lord! Yet the question remains; Does this really meet the need?

China's 18,017,750 officially recognized Christians meet in 32,000 churches and 16,000 meeting points. Each of the estimated 26,000 ordained pastors would have an average congregation of 6,930, though the numbers would greatly vary depending on the locality. For example, in Zhejiang Province, there is just one ordained pastor per 10,000 believers!

If the China's official definition of Christian does not include those who have only a limited knowledge of Jesus and the gospel, or who have not been baptized by an official church pastor, or those who disagree that an anti-God government should dictate how they should live out their faith (which, as reported in some areas, includes prohibiting the evangelization or water baptism of youth under the age of 18, preaching about the Holy Spirit or preaching from the Book of Acts and Revelation), or people who meet to worship God in undisclosed and unregistered locations to avoid arrest and / or persecution, then just perhaps there are a few more Christians in China being overlooked in the head count!

Current estimates by underground Christian leaders in China believe the actual number of Christians in China which do include unregistered Christians, are between 100-130 million. This is about 8 - 10% of the population! Various reports also indicate that estimates of between 20,000 - 30,000 people are being added to the faith daily! For those of us outside China, these are hard estimates to believe. Yet

¹<http://www.amitynewsservice.org/page.php?page=1151>

²http://www.ubscp.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=48

the plea for Bibles coming to those who are providing Bibles from sources outside China indicate that these estimates might not be too far off target.

Last November, the Bible courier ministry our teams work with had requests on hand for over 250,000 Bibles. One contact alone was requesting 50,000 Bibles which represents 20-25 tons of Bibles! At the rate of delivery at that time, it would have taken 6 months to meet just that one need. In 2005 the Bible courier ministry was able to provide only 100,000 Bibles to China's underground churches. That is a lot, but doesn't even begin to meet the mounting needs.

By June of this year out of over 100 Chinese contacts requesting Bibles, the Bible courier ministry had 6 different requests for around 50,000 Bibles! One contact requested 10,000 Bibles for a new work in a new city, realizing that this would be the short term need based on the ready response of the people to the gospel.

But still the argument still remains; If there are so many Bibles being printed by Amity Press, why don't the underground Christians just go to an official Church to purchase a Bible? First of all, these 47 million Bibles printed by Amity Press cover a time period of 20 years. Many of the more recent Bibles are replacements for the earlier one that have fallen apart. Secondly, Amity Press exports over 20% of the Bibles it prints to other countries. Third, in order to purchase a Bible, you need to be a member of the official church or have an 'inside connection', or in some areas you need to be willing to leave your name and address if purchasing a Bible from a regular book store. Another problem is that since about 80% of the underground Christians live in rural areas, many simply cannot physically get to a place where a Bible can be purchased and the vast majority do not have the financial means to pay for it anyway.

China reports that cults are on the rise. Yet we shouldn't be surprised that this is happening if so many who want to follow Jesus don't have access to a Bible. Cult groups, like the violent 'Eastern Lightning', prey on infant Christians who are spiritually hungry and ignorant. Rightly, the Chinese government is making efforts to stop this group and others like it, but in the process is sweeping up many genuine Christians who are deemed a 'superstitious cult' for believing in and experiencing the supernatural power of God.

Daisy and I traveled extensively throughout China for a period of over 20 years and have met many underground believers and have seen with our own eyes the kind of rich faith they shine with. For those who argue that China's Christians have all the Bibles they need, they haven't been to the places I've been to and haven't met these wonderful people who's lives have been powerfully transformed by God's love and grace and who are waiting and praying week after week and month after month for something we take for granted on this side of the planet; their own Bible and a chance to know more of the One they love. The fact is, as things are now, millions of Christians in China will live out their entire lives and die without ever getting a Bible!

I love God's Word! His Word has had a huge impact on my life over the years and is the essence of my life today. I can't imagine how I could live without being daily refreshed by God's Spirit through the breath of his words on the pages of my Bible. My personal Bible is, by far, my most precious possession.

So, while some choose to discuss or argue over China's need for Bibles, as others are wringing their hands in despair over the current shaking and sifting of long held Westernized Christian values and traditions, and as we all hold our breath and wonder what is happening in the middle-east these days, Go Forth Ministry will continue to do what God has called us to do until He directs us otherwise. We'll continue to serve our Brothers and Sister in China in the two areas that they have requested help from their Western Christian Family - to get them Bibles, and to pray for them. This is all they have asked of us. As much as God enables us, we will continue to respond to this most important and reasonable request. ■

Before printing the previous article in this newsletter, I submitted it for critique to several people living in Asia and who are directly involved with underground churches in China. One wrote...

Great article. I also learned new things from your writing. Thank you.

Just one thought! Is the Bible for only Christians or all men and women in China?

If the later is the answer, we have reached only less than 4% of the population, and the government will never allow the number of the Bibles to surpass the number or Bible's need only in Three Self church. Then what about 100 millions in the underground church and over 1 billion other people?

*Just one correction: In "Three Self Church" bookstores, in many areas in China today you can buy the Bible without being a member of "Three Self Church". **

Thank you for your faithful ministry. I am in (location withheld) now, in fact, in my meeting with local leaders this morning, the lack of Bibles was one of the main subjects. I also had a meeting last night with the students in our training unit who are from country side of (location withheld), and they also expressed the urgent need of teachers, Bibles and other literature.

*Blessings,
(name withheld)*

**You can Help
You can GO!**

You can be a part of helping the Chinese Christians by joining with a two week Bible courier team or by financially supporting another person to go. There are also opportunities for

long term workers on the front lines of the Bible courier ministry, and for people to be committed to the spiritual battlefield of prayer. Contact Go Forth Ministry to learn more.

Next Bible Courier Trip
Vietnam & Hong Kong
November 11-25, 2006

April 17 - May 1, 2007: Hong Kong and Guilin, China

\$300.00 reserves your place with the team! Limited space only!
Price for 2 weeks: Only \$1998.00
(not including an additional \$300.00 for food and sightseeing)

Contact Go Forth Ministry before the deadline for details!

* Three Self Church

This is the name given the government sanctioned church in China. In 1951, a Cantonese Christian named Wú Yàozōng (1893-1979) initiated the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, which promoted a strategy of 'self-governance, self-support, and self-propagation' in order to remove foreign influences from the Chinese churches. This was to assure the communist government that the churches would be patriotic to the newly-established People's Republic of China. The strange-sounding name 'Three-Self' is a characteristically Chinese way of abbreviating 'self-governance, self-support, self-propagation'. The movement began formally in 1954.

From 1966 to 1976 the Cultural Revolution stopped the expression of religious life for Christians in China. In 1979 the church was restored, and in 1980 the China Christian Council was formed. Through the council, the registered Protestant church participates in the World Council of Churches.

NOTICE:

Our New GFM Mailing Address is:

GO FORTH MINISTRY

P. O. Box 24
Kidron, OH 44636



Quail, pigs, or people

Bird Flu! In many Asian countries the discovery of just one case of this disease can have a catastrophic impact on the farmers who depend on chickens, ducks, quail or pigeons for their livelihood. On the other hand, it is good news for the cattle and pig farmers as governments launch huge campaigns to eradicate the disease from their country by slaughtering all fowl raised for their eggs and human consumption and driving up other 'four-legged' meat prices. But - more about Bird Flu later...

Brother Joseph was one of the 'boat people' who spent years in the Vietnamese refugee camps in Hong Kong in the early to mid 90's. Notorious for his violent temper and illegal activities inside the camps, his conversion, deep faith in Jesus, and sudden and total transformation made a huge impact on all who knew him. His years of imprisonment after forced repatriation to Vietnam has only added seasoning and refinement to his gentle, Christlike character, deeply impacting all who meet him.

The area Joseph lives in with his wife and 5 children has no underground church. Thus, because he is a known Christian, he is forced by local authorities to attend the only official government 'approved' Protestant church for a city of 350,000. The official church has become Joseph's mission field over the past few years and through him several family's have found a real living Jesus in a place where lifeless religion abounds.

After his release from prison around 2001, Joseph successfully raised a large number of quail and supported his family from the sale of small eggs. Then in January of 2006, Bird Flu was discovered in Vietnam and Joseph's quail farm had to be destroyed. He was compensated with 10 piglets.

When our team arrived in Vietnam in March, we met Joseph on a Sunday afternoon after he had attended the official church in the morning. We were provided with a unique opportunity to visit quite freely while riding up a river on a boat to visit a Buddhist temple where we intended to declare the name, power and authority of Jesus. Over the next few hours Joseph shared with us the story of how the loss of his quail farm and the disastrous venture with the pigs led him to hear God's call.

Just prior to our visit, all his pigs had gotten sick. Half of them quickly died. The others remained very sick. On his way to attend church that morning with a heart heavy with worry about how his family would survive, Joseph prayed and pleaded with God to save the last 5 pigs from dying.

Then the voice of God cut through the distress of his heart and he heard, "How you worry and pray for Me to save your five little pigs! Don't you understand how I long for someone to have the same concern for the 350,000 human souls of this city who are also sick and dying, and of much greater value?" Joseph heard and felt God's heart and repented then and there for being more concerned about pigs than people!

Our boat made its way on up the river to an ancient, dilapidated and dirty idol - filled Buddhist temple, notorious for its unusual power revealed during seances and necromancy (speaking to the dead). People from the highest government offices to the lowest farmers from all over the nation come

As God's call came to Joseph, it also has come to my close friend and co-worker here. Brother Barnabas, as we will call him from now on, had known for many years, even before he and his family came to the USA as refugees, that God would send him as a missionary back to Vietnam. The time has suddenly come and it is the goal of Barnabas and his family to be established back in his home country to serve the Lord by the end of this year. I'll let him tell you about it in his own words...

Praise the Lord! Finally our house was sold. Thank you very much for your thoughts and prayers. The call of going to the mission field in Asia, particularly to Vietnam, was in our heart for a long time. We did not have any idea of how and when it would happen, and

then after years, at this uncertain period of time, we find ourselves wrapping things up to get ready to go. We will move in a house which a good brother in Christ has offered for our family to temporarily live in while waiting to leave. It seems that everything is coming together so well. Thank you Jesus!

Right now I am praying for some financial support to make a trip to Vietnam on the coming September to find out about things over there and how to best make the move there with my family. Please continue to pray for us that God will show us the way to do things properly, and that all the obstacles will vanish so that we can move on swiftly toward this vision.

You may contact us through Go Forth Ministry, or email us at the address:

khoadinh@sbcglobal.net

Thank you and God bless!

to this famed isolated place. Indeed we literally felt the demonic presence as our team, along with our Vietnamese Christian friends, prayed against the powers of darkness that hold countless lives in bondage. We declared the highest authority and power, the name of Jesus Christ to the lying spirits worshiped in that temple, claiming back the stolen hearts for the introduction of the gospel.

As our boat returned down the river from the temple, Joseph shared how God had called him that very morning. Before our team, he dedicated his life for declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ in that city. He clearly understands the immediate personal cost as well as the very high risks this will bring. Yet he knew a long time ago that the call would someday come and had already prepared his heart for it.

Yes, this particular city God has called Joseph to is in the grips of Satan like few other that I've been to. It is a dark place. It is the center of Buddhism in Vietnam. It is also a stronghold for the Cao Dai religion. It hosts the school for Communist leadership. It is a city where a large area in most homes are filled with altars, idols and renown for ancestor worship. Christianity is strongly resisted.

Now God seems to be saying that it is time for His Spirit to be revealed. Joseph is not ignorant about the challenges ahead. Neither am I. That is why I'm sharing his story with you now. Go Forth Ministry will help support Joseph financially through your gifts. But more important, Joseph is confronting deep rooted spiritual powers and needs much prayer support. **Please pray for him** as he pioneers in this hard and dangerous place? ■

Among other things...

During our last trip to Beijing, I met with the publisher and good progress has been made towards getting an ISBN number for "The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ". A few obstacles remain to be worked through this rather complex effort, but God willing, soon this book will be available in many bookstores in China. **Please keep praying!**

We recently were able to send a gift of \$16,000.00 to help with a new printing of 10,000 Hmong Bibles. Thousands of Hmong Bibles are slowly and carefully making their way to these persecuted minority people in the mountains of Vietnam. **Please keep praying for the Hmong Christians** and for the successful delivery of these much needed Bibles.

This has been an amazing year for us so far. In March our house suddenly sold and we found ourselves moving into a new condominium in Kidron, Ohio (about 6 miles from our former home) along side my aging parents. So, soon after we returned from the March trip to China, Daisy and I began packing up our 'stuff', as well as sorting out the remaining things at my parents vacated home. I wish I had time to tell you about all the wonderful miracles that made it possible for us to make this move. It never, never ever should have happened! ...But with God all things really are possible!

Now we live right next to my parents, the perfect solution to a problem that, sad to say, many aging parents and children resist. Please stop by and pay us a visit at:

114 Heritage Green, Dalton, OH 44618

(Located between the two schools on Kidron Road).

Daisy and Jonnie have been in Hong Kong for the whole month of July. Lee, Ellie and I are really looking forward to their return on July 31. They have had good opportunities to serve the Lord during their stay there so far.

Thank you for standing by us in the ministry to China and Vietnam. We appreciate it so much! Many people who would never know the gospel of God's love now do, because of you!

God bless you!

Wendell and Daisy Martin