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848 Stewart Drive, Suite 200, Sunnyvale, CA

Email: info@gcciusa.org

Tel: (408) 636-0030

Fax: (408) 636-0033

Challenges of A Missionary Wife

Leone Taylor



Having been born and raised in a very conservative town, attending church colleges, and pastoring a two-church circuit in Kentucky with Jim for a year, we were faced with a major decision: go to the field three months ahead of our first child or wait until three months after. With Mother and Dad Taylor already on the field (Taiwan), I was confident all would proceed without “hitches”, so we chose the former. That was the first time I ever traveled out of continental North America, which in itself was a major move. Flying across the Pacific via Guam and Japan in a prop plane, by the time we arrived in Taipei, I could no longer wear shoes and had to quickly adjust to “flip-flops”. That first evening we were invited to a meal by friends of the Taylors in Taipei. Oh, my! The smell of Chinese cooking set my stomach churning, necessitating a quick trip to the bathroom. About the only thing I could “stomach” at that point was DELICIOUS Taiwan watermelon – couldn’t get enough of it!

Then on to language study. In that day and

age, being a missionary was a lifetime proposition, so you just buckled down to the tedious task of drilling your “bo/po/mo/fo...” to learn the sounds of Chinese. I didn’t consider myself dumb, but it seemed I could never get it right. The teacher could not speak English, and I was sure I was getting the sounds right – until Mother Taylor pointed out to me that there are also tones to learn! Oh, so that’s my problem! Jim and I started out with the same teacher, sitting through the lessons together. But he was “catching on” much faster than I due to having been born and growing up in China until seventeen. (In fact, he was preaching in Chinese within six months of arriving.) So another teacher was found for me. We followed the CIM course of study, which basically takes two years to cover six sections. It was geared, of course, to church ministry, so we also learned biblical terminology and memorized scripture verses. I enjoyed reading and writing much more than speaking.

Mother and Dad Taylor arrived in Taiwan in

1953, and in October 1955 Holy Light Bible College began under their leadership. Our oldest, Amelia, was born the first day of class. By the second year of Holy Light (Sept. 1956), Dad felt I should be challenged/pushed in my language acquisition by teaching music. I had a lot of experience in music, but had never taught it. Well, nothing like stepping in where there's a need! I had never encountered numerical notation of music before arriving in Taiwan, so that was also a steep learning curve. It intrigued me, so I rather enjoyed deciphering it -- very scientific. Another task that kept me busy was organizing the library. Because I had had the opportunity to learn library procedures while Jim was at Asbury Seminary, I found this another very rewarding area of service. After all, every school needs a good library. It also fit in well with my personality -- a "behind-the-scenes" person (I could hide out in the stacks!). And with Jim being an "up-front" person, it made for a good mix.

From the age of 12, I knew the Lord wanted me to be a missionary. Then in high school that call narrowed down to "China" as Mother Taylor spoke in my home church. Who would have ever guessed at that point that I would go to serve as another Mrs. Taylor! However, I never shared my "call" with Jim until after we were married. Mother and Dad were great mentors to us during our first term in Taiwan. Raising a family, teaching music, doing library -- the Lord knew what I would be involved in even before we arrived on the field and smoothed the way before me.

Our first term covered six years, and we returned to the U.S. for our first home assignment as a family of 5: went out "empty-handed" and came back "full" with three children, ages 5, 3, and 1 -- a REAL handful! But then, again, they were also a "drawing card" dressed up in their Chinese garb. As you can guess, that was the last home assignment they ever agreed to do that! Our three children attended a Presbyterian Church kindergarten in Kaohsiung, being transported by pedicab. Amy was ready for 1st grade when we arrived in New Haven, Connecticut. Can you imagine? She was the only "white" student in a class of "blacks". The redeeming factor was that her teacher was also "white". Well,

nothing like learning to live as a "minority", whether amongst Chinese or African-Americans! Returning to Taiwan, the three children attended an American military school in Tsoying. Soon we realized that the turn-over of teachers/principal did not make for a good education environment. Since Amy was due to advance to the 5th grade, we could not consider putting her into a Chinese school. Signe had finished 3rd grade, and Jamie 1st; so transferring them was still feasible, with Signe starting at 2nd grade and Jamie repeating 1st. That was not an easy transition, but because Mom & Dad were committed, Signe and Jamie took it in stride. They spoke Chinese growing up, so it was the reading and writing that stretched them. It was a great experience for all of us, and in no time Chinese friends/colleagues were saying these two children were thinking like Chinese. From that experience, Signe vowed she would teach her children Chinese, which she has. She also has many Chinese clients in her accounting work in Seattle. And, as you know, Jamie is carrying on the family tradition by serving Chinese as an OMFer -- mobilizing in Chinese churches worldwide for service in China. God truly is faithful!

So, on to the next big challenge! The Taiwan church was losing out because university grads were going abroad for theological studies. There were many Bible schools around the Island, but nothing that met the needs for graduate theological study. Jim was instrumental in bringing together church and mission leaders to discuss this need. The end result was China Evangelical Seminary for university grads and Bible school grads. Being an interdenominational endeavor, it brought together those of differing theological stances. Truly amazing! But what we had in common overrode our differences. Because Jim was the initiator of this new program, he was invited to be CES's founding president. That necessitated a move from Kaohsiung to Taipei, also a switch of schools for Signe and Jamie (Amy was already at Morrison Academy, Taichung).

And where did this librarian fit in? Well, CES needed a library, affording me a 2nd time to start a library from "scratch". When Mother and Dad Taylor left Taiwan for retirement in the U.S.,

they donated the bulk of their books to Holy Light Library, mostly English. I realized Holy Light students weren't making much use of those books, so they were packed and shipped (on loan) to Taipei as the beginnings of a new library. With Dr. Macleod's bibliography of theological books in Chinese in hand, students at Holy Light helped me to order them from various publishers around Taiwan, to be shipped to Taipei. Early on I learned to depend on CES's professors for recommendations on books that should be in the library. The finance department was

very cooperative in making all of this possible. I had been using Dewey Classification System at Holy Light, but realized it wasn't "geared" toward a basically Chinese collection. So I switched over to Lai Yung-Hsiang's (賴永祥) classification for Chinese libraries. It follows the principles of

Dewey, but is more applicable in Chinese history and literature classes. For the Religion class, I followed Dewey. This was my first experience in "adapting" classification schemes to fit the situation. The stickiest point was author numbers, since I wanted to intershelve Chinese and English. That would mean a translated English title would be shelved next to its Chinese edition, and vice versa. While attending a summer library course at TungHai University, I got the solution. With the computerization of CES's Library, things have switched over to the Library of Congress system.

Amy, Signe & Jamie all graduated from Morrison Academy Taichung (our 3 grandchildren most likely also; Mother Taylor served as dorm parent for a semester at its beginning; Jamie's Uncle Bertie was a student there!). I decided I needed my credentials in library (after doing it for 25 years!), so in 1977-78, with the assistance of CES, I took library courses at Univ. of Michigan and received an MALS degree. Returning to CES, Jim and I both felt it was time

for Chinese leadership to come forward at CES. We were cast upon the Lord for our future, which we sensed would eventually be China. But that door had as yet not opened (1980). Then a bombshell dropped upon us! OMF was searching for a new General Director. A previous GD came to visit us in Spring Arbor, MI (where Mother & Dad Taylor were living) and extended an invitation for us to consider. If ever there was a mid-life course change, this would be it! from Taiwan to Singapore, theological education

(25 years) to missiological service, from immersion in Chinese to English (lingua franca of OMF), all involving gains and losses. Dr. Timothy Lin accepted CES's invitation as President of CES, which released us to accept OMF's invitation. But to make clear to OMF where our "heart-beat" was (China), Jim and Mother Taylor (80, after 3 minor



strokes) made a trip to China before our move to Singapore. While they were in China, Jamie & I packed up for our move. The four of us then went to Singapore mid-August 1980 for Jim's induction as OMF General Director.

And this librarian? OMF IHQ also had its library; so, even before our move, I received a letter from Singapore asking me to take charge of the library. Because it was very specialized (missions), I had to work out a whole new classification scheme to fit. That really stretched my mind! But on the basis of working with various schemes for 25 years, I made it! And that scheme stood me in good stead as I trained a librarian for Asian Cultural Training Centre, Singapore, and later moved on to OMF Hong Kong and its library.

OMF's stipulation for Director at Headquarters is that you step down at 60. That gave us 10 years to serve in Singapore. It actually stretched out to 11 years (1980-1991). No question, Hong Kong was our next move – as close to China as possible! OMF's China service during our



It is common to hear Christians say, among many similar remarks: “Another conference? Don’t waste my time over it.”

Many of us are conferenced out, no doubt. When we are bombarded by one conference advertisement after another amidst our already busy schedules and tight deadlines, it is easy that we lose sight of the true spiritual meaning of having a conference.

Lausanne III: CT2010 is more than just a conference. It is a congress, whereby all participants are required to prepare well beforehand so that contribution of ideas can be made right at the event. Among the many good fruits that have come out of CT2010, there is one that is easy to resonate with: “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!” (Ps. 133:1; ESV)

When you savor your view on the Congress, you at once realize the vast number of delegates from different ethnicities of the world who identify with the purpose of the event are willing to be part of it which may hasten the return of Christ.

To ascertain that each and every participant

is brought to this realization, the congress has done something rarely seen, if at all. Operationally, the congress divides all the delegates into table groups which anchor down the seating plan for all delegates. Each day, we will all go to the same table and get to know the other members at that table. Those members are the same ones that you are to get to know, to discuss theological issues with, and to pray with, every day of the congress.

The 6 member complements are such that at least 3 speak the same mother tongue as the table leader; and the rest will be fluent with that same language. Also, they make sure that members are from different countries so as to make a very good mix of backgrounds of idea contribution, albeit how much they have been adjusted through contextualization. Obviously, each member will leave the congress knowing at least 5 good Christian friends from different spots of the globe, and whom they can be counted on ministry and prayer assistance thereafter. If one were to plot the members from all 700 such tables, it will be amazing to see by these little networks how individual

ministries could be strengthened and multiplied. Marvellous mosaics will these be!

Further, when seen through the eyes of a delegate of a small African country, for example, that brothers and sisters from different countries and ethnicities can in fact live, eat, pray, share, fellowship and have fun with each other literally under one roof, it will definitely help strengthen their faith in the truth of His Word in the Bible. They then can return home with a much stronger conviction and a bigger impact on the evangelization strategy the Lord has put into his mind for his home country – and for world for that matter.

Messages from the pulpit are all dynamite, without saying. On the night I was leaving, I was seated in between two US youngsters who went as our beloved volunteers. One right away asked me for the top-most take-way thing from the congress. While I still haven't really digested all that was fed by the congress, at that point I gave him the insistence of truth through the Gospel. Though I was tired, I haven't forgotten to qualify my saying to the youngster that it was not because of the fact that the plenary for the theme "Truth" was given by my own kinsmen

Rev. Carver Yu, but was indeed out of the content of his delivery and the multi-plex discussion sessions.

And of course, I just have to thank the Lord more and more for Dr. Graham and Dr. Stott to have instigated this Movement, which had helped forged our own CCCOWE into being, which to this day is serving as the cohesive force for the Diaspora Chinese church, coaching and encouraging many churches and organizations into better structures and vessels mightily used of God.

Under the weariness of the return trip of almost 24 hours in total, I still could not get away from pondering as to the need for another congress down the road. All in all, I can only say that the next congress must have its use for the peoples and generation then, given that the congress were to be run with the same, if not more, fervour, wisdom, conviction, and harmony in the Lord!

(The author serves with SEND International of Canada)

► years in Singapore was in cooperation with H.K. CCL Publishers for training of house-church leaders. From 1991-1994 we served with OMF H.K. Home Dept. (Westerners wearing Chinese hat!). It became apparent that, to serve openly in China, we would need to go the "professional" route. Hence, the founding of MSI in 1994. During these years I was working in accounts as well as library. The latter extended to assisting seminaries/ training centers in China in selection of library books (Beijing & Chengdu), as well as training in classification (Beijing & Shanghai). My latter years in H.K. were more concentrated in accounts rather than library.

Well, what "strengths" have I acquired in all these 54 years of service in Asia? Looking back, probably it would be organizing libraries from scratch (Holy Light, CES, OMF IHQ, OMF H.K.) and moving libraries (5 times in Taiwan, 2 times in Singapore, 1 time in H.K.). For accounting, it was the "busy work" of accounts, careful of detail and inputting into computer. The Lord knew the end from the beginning and

led me into these areas of service, mostly "behind the scenes" which fit my personality (or did they mold my personality?). Whatever, the full support of Jim in what I was doing all those years made it possible. Being of one heart and mind in marriage and in service was the secret -- mutual support in all we endeavored through the leading of His Spirit. Truly, God is SO good!

And it continues for me even in retirement in the U.S. It is amazing how the Lord led Amy and Bruce to move to Chicago (1985), eventually into a condo that is just one block away from where I found accommodation: 10th floor of Rush University Senior Citizens' Health Center. All doctors' appointments can be met without going outside, which is a blessing during Chicago's winters. Yes, He leads us step-by-step, even to the end.

(Mrs. Taylor is now residing in Chicago very near to her daughter/son-in-law's home. She is attending the Chicago International Fellowship (EFC), where she serves as choir director.)

WWW.NATIONALDAYOFPRAYER.ORG

US National Day of Prayer

NATIONAL
DAY OF PRAYER
TASK FORCE

A MIGHTY
FORTRESS
IS OUR GOD

THURSDAY
MAY 5TH, 2011

The 60th US National Day of Prayer will take place on Thursday, May 5, 2011. Millions will unite in prayer at thousands of events across the nation. The theme, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," is based on Psalm 91:2 that states: "I will say of the LORD, 'He is my refuge, and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.'"

The Official Task Force of the National Prayer Committee in cooperation with many groups is organizing a number of events including prayer concerts at different locales, PODCAST with christianradio.com; teams to reach inner-city families with food, supplies and prayer with Convey of Hope; prayer walks; sending Military kits of information on how to help military families all over the world; solemn (sacred) assemblies in local congregations and making them a vital part of their annual prayer ministry; etc.

In 1952, a bill passed by the congress asking the President of the United State to set aside an appropriate day each year, other than Sunday, as a National Day of Prayer. The National Prayer Committee began as a subcommittee on prayer at the International Congress on World Evangelization held in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1974. The Congress has spawn mission movement in many countries over the years including the Chinese Christian Congress on World Evangelization. The National Prayer Committee was officially formed in 1979.

President Ronald Reagan signed into a law in 1988, passed unanimously by the congress, an amended bill of the 1952 law designating the first Thursday in May for the annual observance of the National Day of Prayer.

For information on local events, please visit the website www.nationaldayofprayer.org.



China: As the society undergoes rapid transition from agricultural to industrial since the 1990's, the rural population decreases from 73.8% to 56% in 2007. It is expected to reach 51% by 2015. Meanwhile the educational level and financial status of urban people increase substantially. And rural churches have suffered steady decline. Most of rural Christians moved to the cities lost to or unable to integrate into churches there. The cities, though, have seen rapid growth of new churches. But 80% of preachers in house churches have not finished junior high school and are without theological training. The Church faces a serious challenge to supply leaders to the urban churches and qualified faculty for seminaries.

<Christian Leadership Institute News, cliglobal.org, Feb/11>

Bhutan: This nascent democracy seems ready to grant official recognition and accompanying rights to a tiny group of 6,000 Christians that has remain largely underground among a population of some 30 million. An official has discussed openly how a Christian group may register with the authority. But some suspect that they are likely to register only one Christian group thus bringing the entire Christian community under regulation.

<Christianity Today, christianitytoday.com, January, 2011>

Albania: The Minister of Culture signed an agreement in November giving legal recognition to 135 evangelical churches. It is significant for a nation that, during Cold War, closed all houses of worship and regarded itself the first officially atheist nation. Christian missionaries entered the nation after Cold War ended in 1991.

<Christianity Today, christianitytoday.com, February, 2011>

Haiti: On January 12, 2010, a missionary was just getting back to his hotel in Port-au-Prince when he was trapped under the rubble after the earthquake. He made it to the elevator shaft and found a hotel employee there. They ended encouraging each other in the dark. He shared his Christian life story with the employee and led him to Christ. After their rescue, he has had network interviews on radio/TV, newspapers, and written a book. He is thankful for the opportunity to witness to a wider world.

<Mission Network News/ www.mnnonline.org, 1/11/11>

Italy: Evangelical Christians make up less than 1% of the population. But over 100,000 practicing magicians live there and Turin has one of the largest satanic churches in Europe. The spiritual climate in Europe is hard. Sometimes arts can speak the truth to ears that fail to listen otherwise. An agency is utilizing artists to share the gospel through dance, music, theater, photography, visual arts, and other high art disciplines. The program has grown and hopes to start internship and short-term mission trips, etc.

<Operation Mobilization, www.omusa.org, 1/12/11>

Uzbekistan: The authorities have denied the release of two import shipments of Bibles. The reasons given were that the requests were not presented in time and that "there is an electronic version available on the internet." These actions seem to be part of the increase of restrictions on evangelical churches. Religious literature is often seized in police raids and later destroyed.

<Mission Network News/ www.mnnonline.org, 2/22/11>

Peru: A missionary couple moved here in 2009 for ministry in discipleship, ESL class and literacy. In a city of 500,000 they noticed no library for children to peruse and borrow books spurring them to start a new one. The children love it. They bring their friends and parents, and tell their teachers. The city is stirred resulting in interview with news stations and request from local library to develop similar model for them. This allows them to building relationship with many people and opens doors for other ministries. They now have mobile libraries in surrounding villages.

<The Mission Society, www.themissionsociety.org, 1/5/11>

Russia: A radio station located in Siberia, one of the last local Christian stations, was shuttered by officials. This is the third one shut down under a variety of pretexts.

<HCJB Global, www.hcjb.org, 12/13/10>

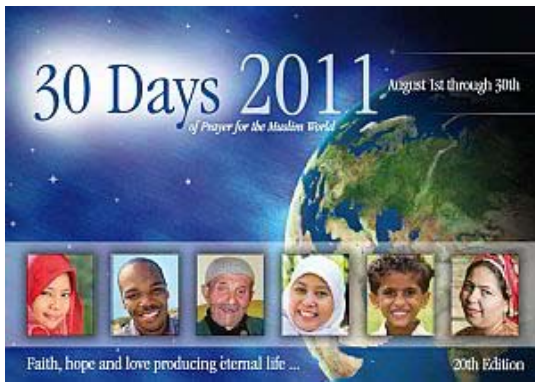
Persecution: 2011 started out with signs of a year of heavy persecution of Christians. In the first 12 days of the year, there were the bombing of a church in Egypt killing 12, 6 other shot with one killed and 5 injured also in Egypt, 70 arrested in Iran for becoming Christian, and threats in Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Gaza strip, etc. Most the problem so far has involved Muslim extremists.

<e3 Partners, www.e3partners.org, 1/12/11>

Uganda: In 2000, a mission agency went to an impoverished and hopeless village where school children spent most of their time working in the fields and doing chores. And no one was interested in school. The agency started by taking 50 of the most at-risk kids in a care program. Over the years, they gained the support of parents to develop the school adding an office, 6 classrooms, teachers' quarters, library block, playground, nursery school and kitchen, plus helping the community develop adult education class, medical dispensary, loan and saving association, and a church. Now the village is transformed and self-sustaining. The agency is leaving with villagers happy to stand on their own.

<Food For the Hungry, www.fh.org, 2/21/11>

Millions Joining to Pray for the Muslim World for 30 Days



A prayer meeting with a handful of Christian leaders in the Middle East in 1992 for the Muslim world has evolved into an annual prayer assembly of millions joining hands all over the world fasting and praying for the Muslims during the Islamic month of Ramadan. This year the Ramadan month starts on August 1 and ends on August 30.

A prayer guide has been produced each year since 1993 containing daily brief overview and up-to-date information of selected locale, group or topics for prayer. The following is a sample of the guide of last year:

For Day 25, September 4, 2010 According to popular legend, a Sufi Muslim saint named Shah Makhdum rode a crocodile up the river and brought Islam to Rajshahi. His shrine in the city is visited by many Muslims in the area seeking a cure for infertility, sickness and other problems. Situated on the banks of the Ganges a few miles from India, Rajshahi city is home to about half a million Muslims

These guides are available in 42 languages including Chinese, Spanish, Korean, Malay, Indonesian, French, Swedish, Swahili, Sinhala, Hindi and other Indian languages, etc. They can be obtained from various regional offices of The 30-days Prayer Network. For detail information, please visit their web-site: www.30-days.net.

