



# Beautiful Feet Ministries

## Yunnan ...

Deborah and I have just returned from our trip into Yunnan Province, in Southwest China. Yunnan is an amazing place. Yunnan literally means in Chinese 云 yún - cloud, 南 nán - south.

There are 44,150,000 people packed into this province of 394,000 square kilometers. Wyoming is 253,348 square kilometers, so in an area of about 1.5 times the size of Wyoming, 44,150,000 people call home. As we traveled north from Hong Kong, on a train, we watched civilization change from cities and skyscrapers to brick houses, then mud & brick, then even some bamboo / tent houses. There is not a square foot of ground without crops growing, and the main crops seem to be corn and chilies. The train trip was a joy. It is 25 hours by train from Guangzhou to Kunming, the capitol of Yunnan. We arrived in Kunming, then boarded another train bound for the city of Dali, one more overnight train ride. Our original intention was to board a bus in Kunming, and travel to Zhongdian, our destination. We were so tired we decided to stay in Dali for several days.

We have been practicing our Mandarin or "Putonghua" as the locals call it, as there are not many English speakers here, and the signs that are in English, are usually so bad that the original meaning is lost in the translation.

Dali is the last "civilized" city on our journey. The train tracks stop here so further travel is by bus or ox cart. We opted for the bus. As we traveled out into the country of northern Yunnan, it was strikingly apparent that life for these folks has not changed much in the last several hundred years. There is little mechanized

machinery, most of the farming implements are man powered or beast powered. We wondered how many of these people have ever heard the name of Jesus, or "Ji Du" as His name is in Chinese. We would soon see. We brought 18 Bibles with us, and we constantly prayed for our Father to open a door for us to share. We knew our Father had someone special in mind to have them. Someone who has been praying to Him for Bibles. But who? We would soon see.

The church in China is everywhere, and nowhere at the same time. It is just under the surface, active, and vibrant, persecuted but not abandoned, struck down but not destroyed.

As we journeyed toward our destination city of Zhongdian, a Tibetan village on the border of Tibet, Yunnan, and Sichuan provinces. We were amazed to see all of the ethnic minorities. This part of Yunnan, has more ethnic minorities than anywhere in China. The people wear the same dress, and do the same things that they did hundreds of years ago. It was like traveling back in time. The road was home to oxcarts, horses, people, people, and more people. We had expected the crowds to diminish as we left the cities for the countryside, but it never happened. In China, where 1.36+ billion people call home, there is NO place that there are no people. Even in sparsely populated Yunnan province there are 112 people for every square kilometer. It makes us appreciate the open spaces of Wyoming. We miss Wyoming very much.

As we approached the area of Zhongdian, the culture changed very much. Everywhere there are signs of Buddhism, and animal worship. The people in the area north of Zhongdian worship chickens, so we were told not to try to eat chicken if we visited there.

The village of Zhongdian is a Tibetan village, in China, not Tibet. The people speak Tibetan, and a little Mandarin, so it was a little more difficult for us to communicate. We enjoyed the challenge. We discovered that Deborah has a talent for deciphering the Mandarin characters, and I am glad because we now have learned

### Romans 9:25-26

25 As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved."

26 "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God."

## Yunnan continued ...

which toilet to use. For Example;

廁 / 厠 = Toilet

男 = Male

女 = Female

It is a bit embarrassing to walk up to a public toilet, and not know which door to go in. Thank God He gave me a wife that is gifted in this area.

Zhongdian is a city that very much reminds us of the bars scene in the original star wars movie. Full of all sorts of "kinds" of people. Different languages, different cultures, different clothes, all very different. It had taken us 4 days of train, bus travel to make it to our destination. But the question still remained, to whom are we supposed to give our precious payload of 18 Bibles to? We prayed and prayed, but no opportunity came, nor did any door open for us. Needless to say, it seemed as though God didn't really need us after all. Imagine that! We prayed some more but still no opportunity came. After a few days in Zhongdian we decided to spend our anniversary in Dali, UGH! one more day of bus travel. In this region of China, it takes about 8 hours on a bus full of spitting, smoking, Chinese people to go



*A lady in Traditional dress, in the village of Zhongdian...*

about 150 miles. It seemed a lot longer. But we finally arrived in Dali, and celebrated our 1 year wedding anniversary over a pizza!

After dinner we decided to go for a brownie at the local bakery. It is a



*A typical street in Zhongdian, a lady doing her laundry.*

western bakery, and they have the best cheesecake.

It is the evening of our anniversary, and little did I know that Deborah asked God for an anniversary present. Someone to give our Bibles to. As we sat there eating or cheesecake, a western woman came in and started to talk to the cashier in Mandarin, we listened of course as we are trying to pick it up, and we heard the name "Shang Ti". That is the Chinese name for the One True Living Creator "GOD". Well needless to say our ears picked right up. Then I noticed over in the corner this plaque;

We were amazed. There right in front of our faces was this Bible verse carved on a piece of wood. After the western lady left there was no one else in the bakery, so we approached the cashier, and asked her in Mandarin if she knew "Ji Du" (Jesus). We understood that she did, and we asked her if she had a "Serng Jing" (Bible). She reached under the counter, and pulled out a Chinese / English NIV! We were very excited. We proceeded to ask her if her local congregation needed Bibles, but we could not make her understand. Then a western couple came in to the bakery, and we stopped talking about the Bible so we



would not get her in trouble. The Lady that came in started to talk to her in Mandarin so fast we could not keep up, and I thought maybe we did get her in trouble. Then the western lady looked over at me and said you want to give this lady 18 Chinese Bible?

I said rather sheepishly, yes. She explained to me that the local believers meet across the street when they can,

and they could most certainly use 18 Bibles.

HALLELUJAH!

As it turns out the western couple that walked in on our conversation, are missionaries studying Chinese at Dali University. Isn't Gods timing perfect? It does appear that God answered Deborah's prayer of being able to deliver His Word to His children on our anniversary. Praise HIM!

### Romans 10:15

**15** And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

### Deborah's Corner.

Well here I am starting all over again. God wont let me complain. I was going to tell you how God will use you in spite of how bad your day is. But I realized half way through typing that story, that it wasn't the day that this happened.

I got to the office, filled out my forms and packed my pull (suitcase) with Bibles. Then the surprise came I was leading the team. Now if you're the team leader you need to have a place inside China picked out for your team to meet once every one crosses the border and goes through customs. I had not planned on having a place. So I quickly looked out side to see if it was raining and seeing that it wasn't I picked a place outside.

This place is about a quarter

---

## Deborah continued...

---

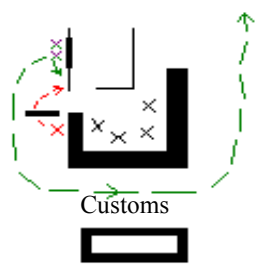
of a mile from the door as you exit the customs building. Which gives you a nice walk in the courtyard if it's sunny. You walk by a big blue building, planters and escalators going down to the taxis. I didn't know of any other teams meeting in this place so it would be a good spot.

With the place established we prayed and left, got on the train, exited Hong Kong and entered China. When we enter China we're in different immigration lines so we go through customs at different times.

I was the last one on my team to get to customs. In customs, I didn't look at the custom officials I just put my pull on the scanner. Immediately I was pulled over to have my bag checked. I looked and two of my team mates had been stopped as well.

The customs area was very busy. They didn't even take my passport right away. I thought of just leaving since I had my passport and bag. But I thought it would be bad if I walked out and was caught again. So I stayed and turned in my passport.

The customs area is shaped like a U. You come in at the bottom of the



U and go out the right arm. If you are stopped for inspection you go to the left. You go through a metal detector

and then wait for an official to open your bag. After they decide how much they will let you keep, sometimes you can ask for Bibles and they will let you have some to take with you. You go to a window and they write you a receipt so you can pick up your stuff on the way out of the country.

Well here I am. There are two people in front of me to be checked. So I stood out of the way leaning on the wall. Just down from the receipt window. The two guys from my team were waiting at the window for their receipts with empty pulls. When they saw

me they said "lets switch bags". I thought, are you kidding, I'm not the kind of person that can pull that off. But we would lose all our Bibles if we didn't, so I moved in front of my bag so he could switch it with his. Which he did. At this point the people writing the receipts seemed to be in slow motion. I have never been so nervous in all my life. All I could think of was what would happen if they check my bag before the guys got their receipts and left. I didn't want to think about it. Just as one of them got his receipt and was walking out with my bag my turn came to be inspected.

The official asked me to open my bag. When I did there was nothing in it, well, you should have seen the look on his face! He felt the front, the back and inside. Then he frantically checked all the bags of the people at the receipt window. He knew that my bag had been full and someone had it. He radioed the ground police, and then let me go since there was nothing in my bag.

I knew they were looking for us so I took the long way through the mall. God's Timing is perfect, and it couldn't have been better. We all met within seconds, the taxi line was short and we were gone in five minutes. I thank God for his blessing, but I don't want to do that again!

---

## On the Lighter Side ...

---

Last month Deborah and I were staying inside China coordinating the efforts there, and we stopped to take a break for breakfast. We went to a restaurant called the "Northern Dumppling", because it was highly recommended by some of our co-workers. In fact the food was delicious, we had pork pie, steamed bread dumplings, and pork and chive fried dumplings. All of it was excellent, and we ate for about 24 Yuan, that's about US \$3.00. As we were paying the bill, Deborah started outside, and I collected the change, and practiced my Mandarin on the cashier.

Just then out from under the table we were sitting at ran the largest rat, I have ever seen in my life. At first glance I thought it was a rabbit. Then a

man, dressed in a suit, with shiny black shoes, came running from somewhere over by the kitchen. He proceeded to stamp on the rat with his shiny black shoes. I stood about 3 feet from the whole matter, and I wasn't really sure what was happening, but I was trapped in the corner by a rat, and a man trying to kill it. For a moment it looked like the rat was going to win. He took 5 or 6 direct blows to his head, and yet he would not die. The man kept stamping on the rats head, and the rat kept trying to bite the mans feet. And then finally, the man took one final leap, and landed squarely on the rats head. All the eyes in the restaurant, turned away from watching the spectacle, and turned back to eating their breakfast, as if nothing ever happened. Then from somewhere in the back a little lady came with a broom and a shovel, and scooped up what was left of the rat, and carried the remains away. I am not sure to this day what she did with the rat, as she ran back towards the kitchen. All the while I stood there I thought, this is not happening. But it did.

---

## Something to Ponder ...

---

As Deborah and I traveled through Yunnan last week, two very startling things happened. The first one happens all too often on the back roads of China. A man was hit by a bus, or car and died. As we passed by on our bus, the man lay in the middle of the road, the locals had brought a coffin, and set it beside him. The custom seems to be to bury them along side the road in the corn fields. We saw very many graves. People were passing by, on foot, cars, busses, and even our bus didn't even seem to slow down as we passed by. Deborah and I looked at each other and said, did he know Jesus? Probably not....





After that same week, we met this beautiful sweet lady, in Dali. We kept running into her and she was very persistent in selling us her wares. We are not really sure what they were but we bought them anyway. (It was some kind of dried fruit, I think). In any case we pay attention when the Lord brings people across our path more than once, and this lady was always on our tail. We prayed about it, and tried to talk to her about Jesus. We asked her if she had ever heard the name of "Jidu" (Jesus Christ) before. She looked us straight in the eyes and said no. You could tell by the look on her face that she was telling the truth. In China, when people have heard of Jesus, and you ask them about Him, their eyes get really big, or they run. This woman, probably in her 80's (or more) has never, in her whole life, heard the name of Jesus. Please pray for her. We are ...

Some of you have asked us about your donations being tax deductible. Deborah and I plan to file for a 501 c 3 next summer when we are home. But in the interim, we are pleased to have joined a missionary organization, and filed for a group exemption under their 501 c 3. All of your donations made to us this year will be tax deductible this year. If you want the deduction however, you must let us know before December 31st (sooner would be better) of this year so we can issue you a receipt.

I am sorry for the confusion that this taxing issue has caused some of you, neither Deborah or I are tax lawyers, and we had to do a lot of research to understand the laws and how they applied to missionaries.

We Have a new Address:

**Craig & Deborah Graber**

**Flat A, 12/F, Block 1**

**Sheung Shui Centre**

**Sheung Shui, New Territories**

**Hong Kong**

Letters, checks and cards should be sent to:

**Craig & Deborah Graber**

**PO Box 2022**

**Jackson WY 83001**

Our dear brother in Christ Tim Henze, is picking up our mail and sending it to us in Hong Kong twice a month or more as needed.

---

### *Prayer Requests ...*

---

The resources for us to continue to do this work, and live here in Hong Kong, this year and next, and however long the Lord leads us.

That God would raise up ethnic minority leaders to pastor and teach in Yunnan.

Unity, and peace among the among the laborers in the harvest.

For Deborah's and my ability to read and write the Mandarin language.

For strength and wisdom for us in the spiritual battle that goes on here.

Office space for a growing LCI.

Blessings upon the short term missionaries who come and work. More short term missionaries to come and work along side us.

Continued growth of the Chinese church.

Safety and strength for those who are suffering in China for Jesus's sake.

Please pray for the continued safety of our co-workers ( and their families) in China. Remember, if they are caught, they will go to prison.