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Gongs in China

thoughts and updates from our life in china

by Alan

Hopefully this newsletter reaches you right in the midst of M-Month. I've always looked forward to M-Month at CEMQ. It was always encouraging and inspiring to hear about the personal stories of how He is using ordinary people with just the right amount of faith, to reach others in incredible ways. He has certainly been using us out here and though it feels like we've been here for a long time already, I think we're just beginning to see just some of the reasons He called us here.

Since we've been living here, I have had so many opportunities to lead and serve, both among the local Chinese community and the community of expat(a foreigner that is living abroad) brothers and sisters. Actually, there were TOO many opportunities. It was starting to stretch me too thin. I was convicted that my priority was to reach the people in the local community, and that my primary ministry field was my workplace.

In the three months working there, my role has shifted according to the needs of the company and my strengths. I've done everything from project planning and product pitches to international companies, to holding weekly English classes and 1-on-1 language exchanges with my co-workers. Just two days ago, my company decided that a huge need of theirs is management training, efficiency improvement, and goal management. They asked me if I could be the one to make it happen.

This new role sounded perfect to me for a number of reasons. First, I've already been unofficially training the managers in their daily handling of their staff and projects, both as a friend and someone with business and leadership experience. Second, my philosophy behind goal management lies in purpose. Purpose in life leads to purpose in the work that you do. Purpose is something that SO many people in China are missing and I'm so excited to be able to bring this discussion to my co-workers. It amazes me at how He has placed me in this position.

Aside from work, life out here is still exciting and adventurous. We took a trip to Malaysia for National Holiday week, got a visit from Cheryl and Brian, and have just been enjoying all that this city has to offer.

That being said, we love being in touch with our family back at CEMQ. Know that you're in our prayers and please keep us in yours.

Alan



by Daisy

Hi! The last few months have been incredible yet challenging. In our previous newsletter, I mentioned I was praying about a job offer I received (to work at an export company). The work seemed uninteresting and I struggled with my own requirements for a "good job." And so I delayed my decision for 3 weeks. It was hard committing with no expectations other than to serve the people I would work with. The longer I'm here the more I realize how and what kind of impact I can have on people. After praying and waiting on Him, I finally received peace and I accepted the job.

While I was waiting for my work visa to go through, I had the opportunity to volunteer at the studio of a local women's and children's clothing designer. Before we moved out to Shanghai I had a broad idea of how amazing it would be to spread the Word through fashion and non-profit retail (an oxymoron that I made up). The founder of the label is a believer and she started a business similar to what I had in mind. Revenue from sales goes toward surgeries for orphans who have spina bifida and paying for their school books and fees among other things. I would have liked to volunteer longer to see how we could use these opportunities to share the Word. It was incredible I was even allowed to experience the work they're doing for a month and a half before starting my job.

When I started my job on September 1st, it was a definite change of pace from a service-mindset to a profit-mindset. I'm still waiting to see what He wants me to do with my time here and more importantly, how I can serve my coworkers. As soon as I started it seemed like I was asked to let people know about my faith. Because of the Chinese holiday system, sometimes we have to make up work days on Saturday or Sunday. I was asked to work on a Sunday and so I let my manager know I attend service every Sunday. Since then he has asked me questions about my faith. I also found out my coworker is also a Sister. Please pray I would be an encouraging sister to my coworker and that my actions and words would be an outward profession of my faith. It's only the beginning and I'm looking forward to what more He has in store for me!

In our small group we started a study called 40 Days of Love by Rick Warren (Purpose Driven Life). We'll be learning about the importance of love and relationships with people. Something he shared in his first lesson really encouraged me. He has visited a lot of people on his/her deathbed over the years and he said that not one of them has ever asked to see their diploma, bank statements, or awards before they die. They always ask for PEOPLE. This really stuck with me and reminded me of the importance of people and relationships. He asked, "Why wait til the end of life to figure out **things** don't matter?" People do! I'm looking forward to learning more in the next few weeks!

I think about our friends and family at home often and I'm looking forward to seeing you all again in December! We'll be arriving a week before Christmas for 2-3 weeks!

Daisy

For more details and frequent updates on our day-to-day living, check out our website: www.gongsinchina.com.

