

**A Legacy of Faithfulness:
USA Assemblies of God Pioneer Missionary
Work in China**
by Michael Berley¹

Introduction

The first quarter of the twentieth century marked the high point for missionary work in China. Many missionaries and Chinese Christians had sacrificed their lives for their faith as the new century dawned but prior waves of Christianity had resulted in little or no remaining fruit. What happened in the early years of the century testifies to the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit.

J. Philip Hogan served as the executive director of Assemblies of God World Missions (AGWM) USA from 1959 to 1989 and had a special burden for China, based on his own experience as a missionary there and Taiwan, from 1946 to 1949. During their first term, they were caught in the ongoing civil war in China between the Communists and the Kuomintang. On one occasion, Hogan saw dead bodies stacked on top of each other by the side of a road and asked himself, “What is the strange god of these young people that will cause them to make this kind of sacrifice? It is going to cost us something to preach Jesus around the world in this hour.”²

Hogan committed his career to several foundational principles. As the executive director, in one of his missionary messages entitled “Missionary Work Today” he outlined four of those principles. First, despite living in a rapidly changing world, the Great Commission is unchangeable. Second, missionary motivation must flow from God’s call. The necessity of obeying that call burns like a fire that identifies closely with the Apostle Paul: “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:16). Third, the world is inhabited by fallen people and Jesus Christ is the only remedy. This conviction compels Christians to go to the ends of the earth to seek the lost. Fourth, works of compassion

¹Michael Berley is a pseudonym for a global worker who has been working with the Chinese for over thirty years.

²Gary B. McGee, *People of the Spirit* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2004), 489.

will always play an important role in Christian missions. The Church ministers to people's needs because that is what Jesus did. All four principles support a three-fold mandate to preach the gospel, make disciples, and plant churches.³

Hogan closed that message by challenging his audience not to confine the Great Commission to a spiritual museum. Its relevance for the Church today demands that "we must make every sacrifice, use every tool, and summon every resource, that this gospel of the kingdom may be preached into all the world for a witness."⁴ Because of his indomitable character and tenure as director, Hogan's philosophy would have a strong impact on AGWM missions during and long after his time in office.

The following narratives, some of which pre-date Hogan, were birthed in spiritual revivals and the prayers of people desperate for God's presence. These are the stories of men and women living in perilous times and a changing world, who believed God had called them. They responded obediently, sacrificing a great deal in the process. In China, they responded to human need with works of compassion. Some saw great revivals as a result of their obedience. Communities and people groups were changed. Others saw little to no fruit from their labor, yet they forged forward. They believed that by breaking up the spiritual ground and planting the seed of God's Word, the day would come when there would be a harvest. These are their stories.

William Wallace Simpson (1869-1961)

William Wallace Simpson was born in 1869 in a one-room log cabin in eastern Tennessee. At the age of twenty-one, he served as a pastor of a small congregation for four months. He taught weekdays in a local school and preached on Sundays. On the second Monday after starting his pastoral responsibilities, he opened his Bible at random to find his text for the following Sunday. He read Mark 16:15: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." He thought that would make a good text, but upon reading it again, he felt it would not be honest for him to preach from that text if he was not practicing it himself. Kneeling in his room, he prayed: "Lord, I am only a poor mountain boy with little talent but I will obey you with all my heart."⁵

Simpson attended the Missionary Training Institute, run by A. B. Simpson of the Christian and Missionary Alliance,—to prepare for

³J. Philip Hogan, "Missionary Work Today," *World Pentecost* 7, no. 1 (1977), 18-19.

⁴Ibid.

⁵W. W. Simpson, "Autobiography of W. W. Simpson" (Springfield, MO: AGWM Archives, n.d.), 5.

missionary service. On February 14, 1892, he read Romans 15:20 where Paul declared his ambition not to build on another's foundation, but to preach the gospel where it had not yet been declared.⁶ Simpson decided that verse suited him and that he would attempt to do the same. He had heard that Tibet was closed to missionaries. The following day he went to see A. B. Simpson and informed him of his decision to be a missionary to Tibet. Pastor Simpson took down his personal prayer book and showed W. W. his entry for that day: "Took by faith that the Lord would call some students to Tibet."⁷

W. W. Simpson arrived in Shanghai in April 1892. He met with James Hudson Taylor and asked his opinion on the feasibility of settling in Tibet for mission work. Taylor frankly laid out several requirements for a successful entrance into Tibet. First, learn the Chinese language and customs. Second, understand the Mandarin system of government and how to deal with government officials. Third, learn the Tibetan language. Finally, they must expect that spiritual forces would oppose them at every step.⁸

Although Simpson wrote that he was willing to study for as long as necessary in order to master the languages, but he also seemed to expect that God would give him a supernatural endowment. When he arrived at CMA headquarters in central China, the director told him to begin language study on May 20. Simpson objected saying that he was praying and trusting God to give him the language. The director told Simpson he would wait until noon to see if God had answered his prayers. If, by noon, he could not speak Chinese, he must start his classes. Simpson later wrote: "I prayed the Lord to guide and He led me to submit."⁹

By 1908, the CMA missionaries in Gansu Province had heard of the Holy Spirit outpouring at Azusa Street. In January, forty local Chinese believers joined the nine missionaries for a week of meetings. At that time, no one expected anything unusual to occur, since they all accepted the CMA stance that they had already received by faith the baptism of the Spirit. Nevertheless, on Friday afternoon, one of the Chinese brothers began to shake and started speaking in tongues. While Simpson was

⁶Romans 15:20ff was the basis for Simpson's belief that Paul had missed God's will in traveling to Jerusalem (Acts 21-23) instead of continuing with his stated ambition of preaching the gospel where it had not yet been proclaimed. He mentioned this in his 1950 sermon, "Redeem the Time" (p. 4) as well as his 1952 message "Why Not Discern This Time?" (p. 10).

⁷W. W. Simpson "Autobiography of W. W. Simpson" n.d.), 5.

⁸McGee, 48.

⁹W. W. Simpson, "Contending for the Faith" (Springfield, MO: AGWM Archives, n.d.), 1.

praying, “Lord, what does it mean?” he heard the Chinese brother speak in perfect English, “Eternity is nigh.”¹⁰

Returning home from the convention, Simpson announced to his family and to Grace Agar, another CMA missionary working with them in Gansu, that he was seeking the baptism of the Spirit as in Acts 2:4.

Four years later, on May 5, 1912, Simpson received the baptism of the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. The following morning, Chow Chao-nan, a Confucian scholar and one of the first converts in that area, visited Simpson and began speaking in tongues. Over the next two days, Simpson’s wife and daughter received Spirit baptism and his ten-year-old son, Willie, began to speak in tongues in their kitchen. Simpson’s daughter, Margaret, who had just received, laid hands on one of her Chinese friends who immediately began speaking in tongues. The next day so many came that they had to put the men in one room and the women and girls in another. Over the next ten days, over thirty local believers were filled as in Acts 2:4.¹¹

By 1913, W. W. had notified A. B. Simpson that virtually the entire work in northwest China was Pentecostal. However, the CMA leadership could not accept the new movement and wrote to Simpson regarding their position: “We hold that the consecrated believer may receive the Holy Spirit in His fullness without speaking in tongues or without any supernatural manifestations whatever.”¹² Since the Simpsons were unwilling to sign that doctrinal statement and unwilling to refrain from preaching and teaching about Spirit baptism from a Pentecostal perspective, the CMA leadership asked them to resign as missionaries. In 1915, Simpson met with the General Council in St. Louis and chose to affiliate with the Assemblies of God.¹³

Simpson ministered through periods of political turmoil as various warlords vied for control of the area. This civil unrest coupled with drought conditions contributed to famine in both 1923 and 1928. Simpson added famine relief to their preaching and teaching ministries. He established a home for famine orphans. In addition, Simpson earlier had introduced potatoes to Northwest China. These potatoes withstood drought conditions better than other crops. These “Simpson potatoes” saved the lives of countless thousands.¹⁴

¹⁰W. W. Simpson “The Spirit Came to Northwest China” (Springfield, MO: AGWM Archives, n.d.), 1-2.

¹¹W. W. Simpson, “Contending for the Faith”, 9-11.

¹²W. W. Simpson “A Chinese Woman Raised from the Dead: Experiences of a Missionary on the Tibetan Border,” *Word and Work*, n.p.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴Edward Koetitz, “William W. Simpson: Missionary to Northwest China, 1892-1949, unpublished manuscript.

Even though Simpson conducted the bulk of his missionary work in the Gansu-Tibetan border area, he also traveled to other provinces where he evangelized and taught in local Bible schools. Simpson, along with B. T. Bard, frequently taught at Truth Bible Institute (TBI), which was established in 1936 in Beijing. TBI claims to be one of the earliest Bible schools of the American Assemblies of God. However, prior to its opening, Marie Stephany and Henrietta Tieleman at the Ta Ch'ang Mission Station in Shanxi Province had opened another training school. B. T. Bard wrote: "The dying masses of China who are still in utter darkness of sin . . . can only be reached with the assistance of a strong and well-trained corps of native workers."¹⁵

Pentecostal ministry with frequent reports of speaking in tongues, gifts of the Spirit, healings, and exorcisms marked Simpson's travels. Several testified to witnessing people raised from the dead. Simpson served in China until 1949, when at the age of eighty, he was forced to leave the country.

His primary missionary methodology focused on establishing churches and discipling local believers to become pastors and evangelists. Several years ago, David Plymire, whose parents were contemporaries of Simpson and also worked among the Tibetans, visited southern Gansu Province to see what, if any, fruit remained from Simpson's work. He discovered that several churches, despite the Chinese government's stand against denominationalism, still identified as "Assemblies of God." Furthermore, church bookstores still sold books containing copies of Simpson's sermons.¹⁶

Harold Armstrong Baker (1881-1971)

H. A. Baker and his wife Josephine had been working for five years on the China-Tibetan border when they first met Pentecostal missionaries who told them about the baptism in the Holy Spirit. During their furlough back to the United States, they received Spirit baptism and spoke in tongues.

The Bakers' ministry in China centered on two primary works. First, they opened an orphanage that became famous because of a revival among the boys in the 1930s. Many of the boys in the orphanage received visions of heaven and hell. Baker's book, *Visions Beyond the Veil*, documented these events and was eventually published in thirteen languages and sold tens of thousands of copies.¹⁷

¹⁵B. T. Bard, "The Gospel in Foreign Lands," *Pentecostal Evangel* (July 18, 1936), 8.

¹⁶David Plymire, Unpublished report of his trip to Gansu Province from August 18-28, 2015.

¹⁷McGee, 97.

During a season when Baker was experiencing a crisis in his career, he encountered a boy crying in the streets. This young boy had been working in the local tin mines. Too sick to work, he had been thrown out on the streets to beg for food. Baker invited the boy home with him and provided him with clothes to wear and food to eat.¹⁸ The Adullam Mission launched that day. Baker took the name “Adullam” from 1 Samuel 22:1-2 which describes the distressed, poor, and disconsolate joining David.

At one point over 100 children lived at Adullam. During the last two years of operation, the orphanage ministered to approximately eighty children. Every day, the residents studied the Bible and contributed to the support of the orphanage through such chores as gardening, carpentry, and other tasks.

The Bakers’ second primary work focused on minority peoples scattered throughout the mountains of southern Yunnan province. Baker referred to these people as the Ka Do. Both of these ministries resulted from Baker’s conviction that Jesus had been anointed by the Spirit to preach the gospel to the poor:

Why spend so much effort on stony ground when richer soil lay all about me? I would seek the poor, the meek. And where would I find them? Were they not the homeless boys on the street who were begging their daily food while the well-fed boys of the “better class” were yelling “foreign devil” at me? Yes, I would go to the poor whom Jesus loved. I would go to the beggar boys on the street. And were the “poor” not also the neglected and despised primitive tribes in the barren mountains all about that rich and fertile valley? Yes, I would go to these mountaineers too.¹⁹

Even though Baker did not preach in the tribal languages, he became one with the people of the villages. His methodology was simple. First, build self-supporting churches. Second, travel simple. This meant that he adopted the clothing, the food, and the lodging of the villagers.

Third, preaching and teaching could be scheduled anywhere. He preached in kitchens, courtyards, underneath trees—wherever it proved convenient for those listening. Fourth, he was Pentecostal. Miracles of healing, casting out of demons, speaking in tongues as villagers were baptized in the Spirit, prophecies, and visions followed his ministry.²⁰

¹⁸H. A. Baker, *Seeking and Saving* (Mojiang, Yunnan, CHINA: Adullam Reading Campaign, 1940), 46-47.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 45-46.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 119.

The Joshua Project states that Baker played a significant role in starting thirty-three Ka Do churches prior to 1950.²¹ By 1986, the Ka Do numbered 40,000 followers of Christ with over 150 full-time Christian workers. In Mojiang County, one-third of the 5,200 believers were teenagers and 35 percent of all Ka Do today are Christians.

Les Anglin (1882-1942)

Les Anglin was born in 1882 in Georgia. Twice during his childhood, he miraculously escaped death. However, another event marked him for life. When three beggars came to his home, he noticed that his mother gave them food. Les asked later: “How do you know that these beggars are not just lazy men unwilling to work?”

His mother replied: “Perhaps that is true. But we must give them the benefit of the doubt.” She continued by telling Les the story of the Good Samaritan and reminded him of 1 John 3:17 which says that we cannot say we love God if we fail to respond to meet the need of our brother when we have the resources to do so. Les never forgot.²²

Les and Ava Anglin married in 1904. Family circumstances took them to New Mexico, where a meeting with a faith missionary, T. L. Blalock, changed the direction of their lives. Blalock influenced them to commit to serve in China. They were assigned to the city of Tai-an and arrived there in 1910. Their daughter, Margaret Evelyn, died shortly after their arrival. She was only 16 months old. Her death left them with many questions. “Had they not given up everything to serve as missionaries? How could God take their little girl?”²³

The Anglins devoted their ministry to evangelism. Les would study maps and plot ways to strategically saturate the area with a gospel witness. As he preached, he began to realize that foreign missionaries could never effectively evangelize the country. A plan evolved for training new converts and preparing them for ministry. Moreover, if this plan was to succeed, it would require strong Christian families to live out the message and support local churches.²⁴

A chance meeting with a street beggar during one of their evangelistic trips changed the direction of the Anglin’s ministry. They

²¹Joshua Project, “Kado in China,” https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/18516/CH. (accessed October 19, 2016).

²²Harry Albus, *Twentieth-Century Onesiphorus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1951), 27-31.

²³*Ibid.*, 32-43.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 44-45.

shared their food with this little boy named Lieu. Lieu later became the first orphan admitted to the Home of Onesiphorus.²⁵

Anglin's purchase of a small home in Tai-an led to the establishment of the orphanage named the Home of Onesiphorus. The chosen name came from 2 Timothy 1:16: "The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not afraid of my chains" (NASB). Many people needed a place of refreshing and rest during that season of turbulence in China's history.²⁶

By 1927, 500 children and 100 adults lived at the Home of Onesiphorus. During a famine in 1928, the number swelled to 1,150 residents. Some have described the Anglin's ministry in Tai-an and the Home of Onesiphorus as an example of community development. Each child learned a trade. Some boys learned tailoring while the girls learned to sew. They purchased looms for weaving, and when they produced more cloth than the home needed, they sold the excess and used the profits to help with other expenses. One group of boys learned carpentry skills and built furniture. Shoemaking provided shoes for all the children in the house. They made so many shoes that they began selling an average of a hundred pairs a week in the surrounding community. Then they purchased a flour mill and began to grind grain making their own flour.²⁷

In the winter of 1925, the home's flour mill saved the entire community. Warlords prevailed in 1920s China as rival armies fought to extend their territories. Two such armies were fighting in the Tai-an area, when one army needed food. The general demanded food from the townspeople made from the best available flour. The community could not fulfill the request and, in desperation, asked the Home of Onesiphorus if they could grind flour for them if they provided the grain. The flour mill ran day and night for several days and the city was saved.²⁸

News of the home spread throughout the area. Two girls with their mother and brother walked eighty miles to ask for help. Five boys walked forty miles. The Anglins could not say no to anyone who asked for help.²⁹

Not all in the missionary community understood the Anglin's vision. In the early stages of the work, Anglin frequently heard comments criticizing him for giving up evangelistic work for orphan ministry.

²⁵Ibid., 48-49. The background of Peng Lieu is told in Les Anglin, *Repairing the Breach* (Milwaukee, WI: Word and Witness Publishing, 1933).

²⁶Cathy Ketcher, "The Onesiphorus Man," *Worldview* 1, no. 6 (June 2015), 24-31.

²⁷Albus, 65-68.

²⁸Ketcher, 30.

²⁹Albus, 73.

Others asked if he had forgotten the importance of preaching the gospel.³⁰

In actuality, evangelism became the centerpiece of the ministry of the Home of Onesiphorus. They had adopted a long-range plan which emphasized planting the gospel message into the lives of young people. Anglin envisioned that these young people would carry that same message to their own people and be the heart of indigenous Chinese churches.³¹

From its start in 1916, the Home of Onesiphorus began with three primary purposes. First, the Home existed to demonstrate the power and love of God. Anglin believed in ministry to both the physical and spiritual needs of a person. He believed that the things Christians *do* present stronger demonstrations of God's power and love than the things they *say*. Second, the Home provided a means to spread the message of the Cross. The Tai-an Home was in the vicinity of Tai Shan mountain, an area visited by thousands of Chinese each year for ritual worship to their gods. The Home of Onesiphorus stood as testimony to streams of men, women, boys, and girls who had been set free to worship the one true God. Finally, the Home committed itself to training boys and girls who had accepted Christ as missionaries, evangelists, or Spirit-filled members of a local church.³²

A natural question arises as to whether the Home of Onesiphorus fulfilled these three purposes. The Home clearly demonstrated the power and love of God as evidence by Les Anglin's own thoughts:

The Home of Onesiphorus was opened in 1916 for the purpose of rescuing the helpless, such as old men and women with no one to care for them, younger women who are left widows with a few children, also boys and girls who are forced by circumstances to beg for a living. The Home has been the means of bringing the Gospel to the destitute in such a practical way they have been convinced that the religion of Jesus is real and they have sought Him and found Him precious to their souls.³³

The Home of Onesiphorus sought to lift the residents of the Home out of poverty by providing education and vocational training. Anglin described the orphanage as an "institution where helpless men, women,

³⁰Ibid., 62.

³¹Ibid., 62-63.

³²Ibid., 109-111.

³³Les Anglin, "The Home of Onesiphorus," *Pentecostal Evangel* (September 2, 1922), 12.

boys, and girls are cared for, and all who can work are given something to do so that they will not feel that they are merely objects of charity.”³⁴

Les Anglin became known in the community as “The Onesiphorus Man.” People believed that if they could somehow make it to the Home, they would receive assistance. Anglin determined that he would never turn anyone in need away from his door.³⁵

Life in the Home each day began with a chapel service following breakfast. The service included singing, praying, and reading God’s Word, followed by an explanation of its meaning and significance. Ava Anglin conducted an afternoon Bible service for wives of workers and widows.³⁶

The third purpose of the home called for boys and girls who, having accepted Christ, would fill the roles of missionaries, evangelists, and Spirit-filled members of local churches. In 1917, Anglin wrote that every girl in the Home, except one, had accepted Christ and nearly all had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.³⁷ In 1925, he reported that over 200 people had received Spirit baptism in the Home and around the city of Tai-an.³⁸ In 1928 Anglin wrote, “Quite a number of our children want to go out as missionaries when they become men and women.”³⁹

The first graduating class of the Home exemplified the desire Anglin wrote about in 1928. The first graduating class had three boys and three girls. Two boys went out as preachers. The other worked as a Christian mechanic. One of the girls married and engaged in missionary work with her husband. The remaining two girls became department leaders at the Home.⁴⁰

Anglin’s Home of Onesiphorus enabled him to fulfill a God-given dream he had received in the early years of his missionary career. “China’s great need is self-supporting Chinese Spirit-filled Christian workers who can go out and spread the good news and teach the people the truths of the gospel.”⁴¹

Les Anglin died in 1942, and Ava Anglin ten years later. In 2006, the city of Tai-an and the Chinese government held special celebrations to honor the Anglins and the Home of Onesiphorus on its 90th

³⁴Les Anglin, “Our Mottoes,” [sic] *Gospel Gleaners* (August 12, 1928), 2.

³⁵Albus, 69-71.

³⁶Anglin, Onesiphorus News Items,” *Pentecostal Evangel* (April 30, 1927), 11.

³⁷Les Anglin, “Amongst China’s Millions,” *Pentecostal Evangel* (October 6, 1917), 11.

³⁸Les Anglin, “Year’s Report from the Home of Onesiphorus,” *Pentecostal Evangel* (March 21, 1925), 10.

³⁹Les Anglin, “Our Mottoes,” 2.

⁴⁰Albus, 68.

⁴¹Randy Hurst, “Legacy of Compassion,” *AG Heritage* 21, no. 1 (Spring), 14-16.

anniversary. They extended invitations to the USA Assemblies of God to send representatives to join the commemoration ceremonies.⁴²

Today, the Home continues to minister to the poor, the suffering, and the unwanted. One section of the campus provides care for severely disabled and special needs children. Neither American missionaries nor American finances are allowed at this time. However, the legacy of the Anglin's continues to challenge and touch the lives of the Chinese.⁴³

Marie Stephany (1878-1963)

In 1900, Shanxi province became the scene of one of the worst bloodlettings of Christian martyrs for the entire Christian era. The Boxer Rebellion claimed the lives of both foreign missionaries and Chinese Christians throughout large parts of China, but it hit Shanxi province particularly hard. The provincial governor, Yu Xian, encouraged the killings, which resulted in the martyrdom of more than 150 Protestant missionaries. In addition, hundreds of Chinese believers throughout the province were hunted and murdered because of their Christian testimony.⁴⁴

Prior to these tragic events, however, God had already begun preparing new missionaries who would come to serve in this key north central province. In Austria-Hungary, 500 miles from Budapest, Marie Stephany was born to a Catholic family on December 9, 1878. God's call and plan for her life would take her to the United States and then on to China where she would head a team of women missionaries. Three women – Marie Stephany, Henrietta Tieleman, and Alice Stewart – would plant a church of over 900 people, establish an orphanage ministry and a drug addiction deliverance center, hold tent meetings in surrounding villages, and conduct short-term Bible school training.⁴⁵

These ministries would present daunting challenges to any team of missionaries in ordinary times. But the three decades of 1920-1949 in China proved to be some of the most turbulent in Chinese history. Famines and rising crime, combined with Japanese occupation and confinement, as well as the ongoing civil war between the Communists

⁴²Ketcher, 30.

⁴³Randy Hurst, "Christianity in China," *Pentecostal Evangel* (April 5, 2009), 21.

⁴⁴Paul Hattaway, *China's Book of Martyrs* (Carlisle, UK: Piquant, 2007), 103.

⁴⁵Information on Marie Stephany and her work in Shanxi Province can be found in Stephany's books *The Dragon Defeated* (Milwaukee, WI: Word and Witness Publishing, n.d.) and *The Power of the Gospel in Shansi Province* (Springfield, MO: Foreign Missions Department, 1939) as well as Alice Stewart's book *Like Zion's Mount in China* (Springfield, MO: AGWM Archives, n.d.).

and the Nationalists, would have been reason enough to retreat to more convenient and peaceful locations.

After two years of ministry in Shanxi Province, Stephany settled on Ta Ch'ang for her permanent mission station. From the beginning, she prioritized evangelism. Stephany followed a simple plan. Realizing the difficulty of getting people to enter buildings, she purchased a tent for her evangelistic meetings. Her team devoted seven months of every year to this ministry throughout the neighboring villages. Once people responded to invitations to accept Christ, she started holding meetings in their homes. As these grew, they would open a station under local leadership and support. Follow-up meetings helped establish the new disciples.⁴⁶ When Tieleman and Stewart joined her team, these three women oversaw the work of fifteen indigenous outstations which all operated under local leadership.

Most of the early Assemblies of God missionaries believed in the priority of evangelism, but when confronted with the dire needs of hurting people, they responded with compassion and sought to alleviate the suffering. Such was the case with Stephany in the early 1920s.⁴⁷

Stephany confronted two pressing humanitarian needs in her field of service. For many years, government officials in Shanxi had attempted to curb opium addiction. These officials proposed increasingly drastic solutions to the opium epidemic. They ordered the beheading of anyone who trafficked opium. The heads were displayed in public locations to warn the citizenry of the severe punishment for selling the drug. When that did not alleviate the problem, a subsequent law decreed that both those who sold *and* used the drug would be executed. Even though hundreds of people were executed, the power of addiction continued to ruin lives.⁴⁸

Stephany reached out to individuals bound by the “devil’s smoke” and proclaimed the power of God to deliver from the addiction. Her approach foreshadowed that of the still decades distant Teen Challenge.⁴⁹ Alice Stewart shared the following story of deliverance.

Mrs. Kuo had attended the mission station as a young girl and learned the song, “Jesus loves me, this I know.” In her early teens, her father gave her in marriage to a non-Christian family and her mother-in-law cruelly mistreated her. When her husband became sick, he became addicted to opium while using it to ease the pain. The Kuo family impoverished themselves trying to satisfy his drug craving. During those dark days, Mrs. Kuo remembered the words of the song she had learned

⁴⁶Marie Stephany, “Shansi Province.” *Pentecostal Evangel* (September 1, 1928), 11.

⁴⁷McGee, 255-256.

⁴⁸Stephany, 23.

⁴⁹McGee, 256.

as a child and wondered if she would ever feel again what she experienced while singing that song years before.

One day, some people came to her village and pitched a big tent and advertised meetings would be held there later that day. The whole village turned out to see the big tent and the “foreign devils.” As Mrs. Kuo listened, she realized they were talking about the same Jesus she had sung about as a little girl. She heard that drug addicts received help by the people conducting these meetings and persuaded her husband to seek deliverance. Impressed by the life of the Bible woman at the gospel hall, the husband cried out to God for help and received miraculous freedom from his addiction. When he returned home a new man in Christ, his wife opened her heart to Jesus as well. Soon their home became a site for Bible studies and home meetings.⁵⁰

The many ministries of Stephany’s Ta Ch’ang station required many national workers. Within a few years, more than thirty of the forty national workers who worked with Stephany were former addicts who had received deliverance and discipleship under her ministry.⁵¹

The problem of opium addiction produced another significant challenge. Many of the addicts had become too poor to support their children. Baby boys could easily be sold to families who wanted a male heir. However, people did not want baby girls, resulting in many being drowned at birth or discarded in the barren fields.

One day a man found a baby crying in a field and brought the baby to Stephany. The baby, wrapped in straw, had been surrounded by three dogs waiting for the baby to die. Stephany accepted the child giving her the name “Hope,” which symbolized the hope for her to live.⁵² Hearing that Stephany received babies, beggars would make arrangements to sell her the abandoned babies they found in the fields. Eventually, Marie’s family had grown to over thirty children.⁵³

The trio of Stephany, Tieleman, and Stewart served under extremely stressful conditions. Early on, God had given them Psalm 91:5-7 as His promise of protection: “Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee” (KJV).

Despite the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in June of 1937, they stayed and opened up their mission as a refuge station. Despite sporadic communication and assistance from supporters in the United States, God

⁵⁰Alice Stewart, “Jesus Loves Me,” *Pentecostal Evangel* (August 3, 1946), 10-11.

⁵¹Randy Hurst, “Legacy of Compassion,” *AG Heritage* 21, no. 1 (Spring 2001), 14.

⁵²Stephany, 40-42.

⁵³Adele Flower Dalton, “They Called Her Mother Peace,” *Memos* (Fall 1993), 4.

provided for their needs. Turbulent times produced receptivity in the hearts of displaced individuals living in times of uncertainty. As many people accepted Christ and were filled with the Holy Spirit, God turned calamity into blessing.

This team of missionary women, together with their national co-workers, had built a church in Ta Ch'ang that could accommodate 900-1,000 people. The Ta Ch'ang mission that had begun in a rented house with only one Chinese evangelist to assist Stephany had grown to include several buildings used for an orphanage, addiction deliverance center, Bible school, and church. Over thirty workers assisted the work there and in the various outstations established from the tent evangelism program. At least two-thirds of these workers had been delivered from addiction to opium. In addition, twelve students from Ta Ch'ang enrolled in Truth Bible Institute in Beijing with twenty additional workers studying at the local four-month Bible study.⁵⁴

Conclusion

The introduction of this article references J. Philip Hogan's message "Missionary Work Today." Hogan emphasized an unchangeable Great Commission, obedience and faithfulness to the call of God, Jesus Christ as the only remedy for fallen humanity, and following Christ's example of ministering compassionately to people's needs. The four narratives above share the stories of individuals who lived out Hogan's four principles. But reaching above Hogan's principles, these missionaries lived out the fulfillment of God's Great Commission and Great Commandment.

What conclusions can we draw from this article's narratives? First, a certainty of God's call gives missionaries the strength and courage to stand firm in their commitment. That call includes the conviction that our message is the most important message in the world. Second, God's call on our lives demands faithfulness, especially in times that are changing, perilous, and turbulent, which are also times of opportunity. The faithfulness to obey and "go and make disciples" brings forth God's response of "I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Third, God uses various strategies of ministry to accomplish his plans and purposes. The creative God we serve provides creative ways to minister in our changing world.

Finally, it is not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God (Zechariah 4:6). It is the Holy Spirit who calls. It is the Holy Spirit who inspires. It is the Holy Spirit who reveals. It is the Holy Spirit who

⁵⁴Adele Flower Dalton, "Mother Peace," *AG Heritage* 7, no. 4 (Winter 1987), 5.

administers.⁵⁵ We have inherited a legacy of faithfulness. May we pass it forward to the next generation.

⁵⁵J. Philip Hogan quoted in Everett Wilson, *Strategy of the Spirit* (Carlisle, UK: Regnum, 1997), 127.

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