

The Power of Listening



*"Come tell me your trouble,
I'm not your answer, but I am a listening ear"*

Brooke Fraser's opening lines from the song 'flags' echoes the feelings of one foreign worker who lives in a city where many Syrian refugees have come to find shelter. Here is her story:

"You are the first native English speaker we ever talked to".

I had just arrived in Gaziantep, southeastern Turkey, and my landlord had sponsored an outdoor party. Eager to practice my newly acquired Turkish, I tried to speak to a sweet boy of about 8 years old sitting shyly on a bench nearby. He looked at me confused. A person nearby said, "He doesn't speak Turkish. He's Syrian." I scrambled to remember a phrase in Arabic and the boy smiled. Later I got to meet his family. I learned that they had fled Aleppo just four weeks earlier. In the months that followed, I learned their story and I've become like part of their family here in our new city.



When it can, life goes on in Syria

Safaa and her husband owned a pharmacy in Aleppo, Syria. They were well off. Safaa remembers the day when her husband came home and told her they must leave Syria. They quickly packed as many of their belongings as they could fit into their car and drove to Turkey. Unlike many Syrians, this family had passports which allowed them to travel easily. Safaa's brother-in-law and his wife and baby, were not so lucky.

However, even for this once financially secure family the situation is grim. They are living on their savings and have no job prospects in the near future. In Turkey, Syrian refugees are allowed to rent private accommodation but are denied the right to work. They and their children must learn

Turkish and must continue their education. The government has set up some schools for the Syrian population though as far as I know, it's only at primary school level.

Visiting my Syrian friends invariably means multiple cups of tea while I listen at length to their story. I'm struck over and over by the complexity of the conflict in Syria. The events happening today are inextricably linked with a long and complicated past.

Listening to them is the first step towards healing as we show that their story matters. In doing so we also allow God to work in our hearts the response He desires and that will give unique expression of Himself to them.

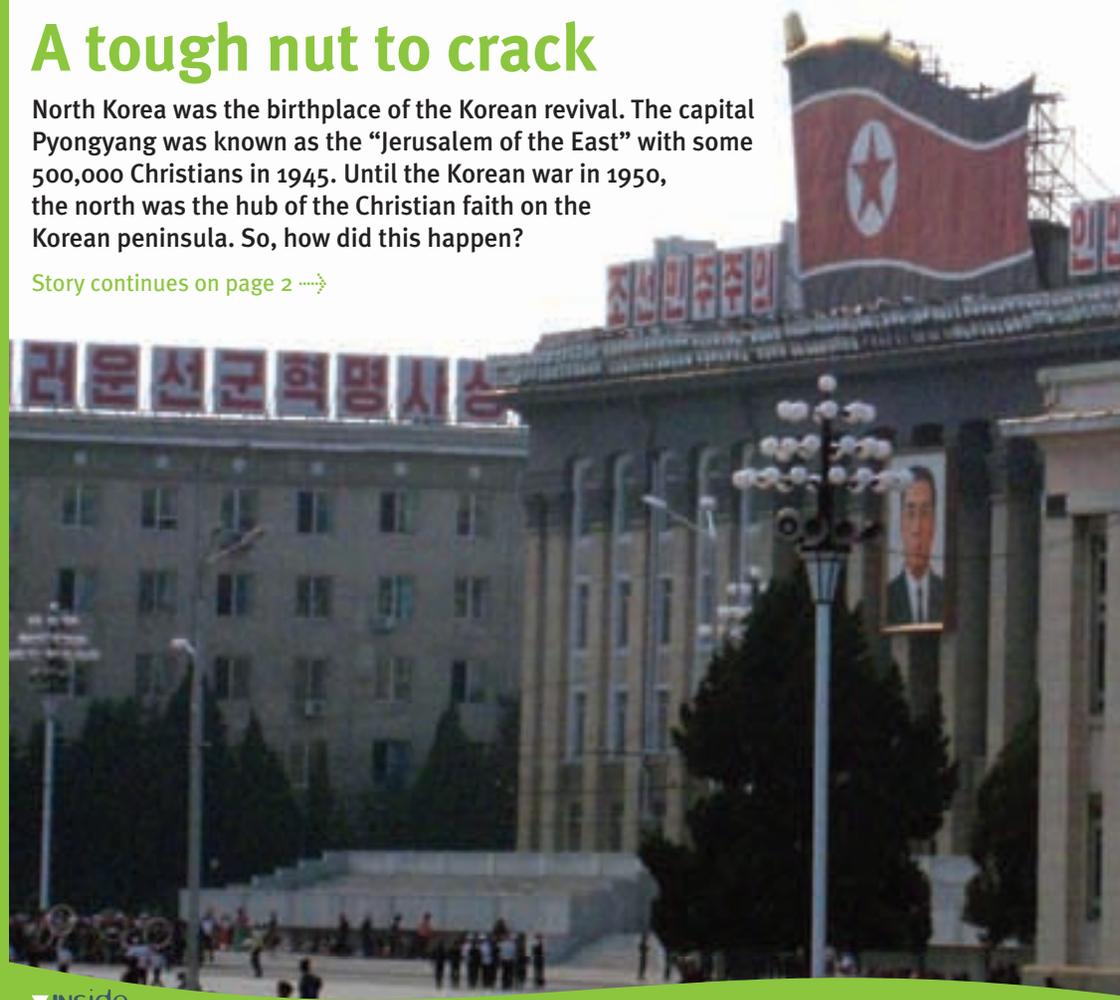


BE PART OF IT

A tough nut to crack

North Korea was the birthplace of the Korean revival. The capital Pyongyang was known as the "Jerusalem of the East" with some 500,000 Christians in 1945. Until the Korean war in 1950, the north was the hub of the Christian faith on the Korean peninsula. So, how did this happen?

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A tough nut to crack (Continued)

In 1866 Welsh missionary Robert Thomas went to Korea against advice, as interpreter on an armed American trading ship called the General Sherman, at a time when uninvited foreign trade was forbidden. While the ship headed towards Pyongyang on the Taedong river, Thomas in evangelistic fervour was busy tossing Chinese Bibles on to the riverbank. Incensed at the illegal incursion and the foreign literature that could litter traditional Korean culture, not to mention the waterway, officials ordered the foreign vessel to leave. The captain refused. However, overstaying would soon be the least concern.

On August 25, Hyon-Ik Yi, a Korean official acting as go-between for the General Sherman and the Korean government, was taken into custody by the ship's crew with his two subordinates. In response, a quick witted Chun-Gwon Park organised and lead a party that successfully rescued Yi but which ended in the death of the two subordinates.

Moreover, on August 31 the General Sherman fired cannon and gun shots at civilians killing 7 and wounding 5.

In reprisal, the vessel was attacked and set on fire when it ran aground in a muddy Pyongyang river. There were no survivors. Fourteen were shot and killed, four burnt to death and two who jumped ashore were fatally beaten by an angry mob.

Where was Robert Thomas in all this?

Thomas was one of the two that jumped ashore. Some say that he leapt from the boat carrying Bibles saying "Jesus, Jesus!" in Korean to the attackers, offering them a Bible.

Another account puts Thomas' death more prosaically. A Korean soldier reported "one of the crew put to death by sword had a red book".

Regardless, and in spite of the hostile crew to which he was a party and the tragic consequences of their actions, rightly or wrongly, Robert Thomas is considered the first Protestant martyr in Korea. What's more, it is believed the whole nasty

incident lead to the growth of the Korean church. Eh? How so?

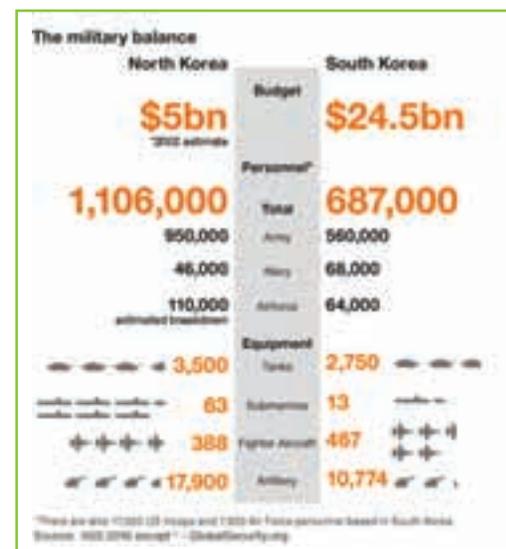
Apparently Thomas' executioner, Park Chun Kwon, used a Bible he had found to wallpaper his house. When friends and relatives visited his humble abode, the fascinating wall decor with foreign ideas was often the topic of discussion and became a village attraction. Soon, a small community of believers grew eventually leading to the establishment of the North Korean church by the 20th century. However, during the Korean war (1950-53) many North Korean Christians were martyred by Communist authorities, or fled south. While Christianity grew in the South, the 50s saw all visible evidence of the church in the North disappear.

Sadly, for the tenth year in succession, North Korea comes top on Open Doors' World Watch list as the most difficult country in the world in which to be a Christian. There are reports of many arrests, with at least 25% of Christians believed to be in labour camps for their refusal to worship Juche - founder Kim Il-Sung's cult. Possessing the Bible, saying "God" or "Jesus" and meeting as believers are all actions punishable by death. Despite the risks, the church is growing: there are an estimated 400,000 believers.



For the privileged few: International Children's Day in Pyongyang

While there is indeed spiritual hunger, the people's physical needs also go largely unmet. Nearly 2/3rds of the 24 million population are starving or at high risk. With over 30% of GDP going towards weapons production, this tragic state of affairs is not surprising. The acquisition of nuclear weapons technology with a reliable missile delivery system



Juche monument

has been a long held ambition of North Korea. Considered a national treasure, one North Korean bureaucrat said "we will never give up [nuclear weapons] for even billions of dollars of foreign aid."

With all this in mind, it's easy to put North Korea in the too hard basket. Thankfully, there are some that do believe things can change and are joining with God in seeing his glory revealed. Some examples include:

- A North Korea university staffed by Christian academics.
- Visiting tutors delivering training programmes.
- A South Korean Ministry sending medical, food and clothing supplies to NGOs in North Korea.
- Hiding North Korean escapees across the border in China to send them to the South (the 2008 movie "Crossing" is a harrowing portrayal of this, on Youtube).
- Sponsoring North Korean refugees sent to the West including New Zealand.

These are just a few ways God is creatively drawing the people of North Korea to himself. If God has given you a vision to crack a tough nut, talk to us today!

Renewable ways to reach the unreached

James Gray, WEC NZ Promotion and Recruitment.



Solar PV panel

An interesting situation vacancy role was advertised in the last issue of Golnto for an electrical engineer working with Renewable Energy Technology "somewhere" in Asia. So far we've had 3 enquiries from well qualified and experienced individuals. For me, there are at least four reasons why opportunities like this are exciting. Firstly, the field itself is about innovation.

Many places in the developing world have little or no access to electricity. With increasing urbanisation taxing an already decrepit electricity network, there is little chance of reliable power supply being extended to rural areas. A traditional alternative has been the use of diesel generators however capital and running costs are increasingly prohibitive, especially for the poor.

But in RET there can be a solution. What is it? RET is the use of naturally occurring renewable resources such as solar, wind and hydro energy that is harnessed by various technologies (solar photovoltaic, wind turbine and micro hydro) to produce electrical energy.

For instance, in developing countries or very remote off-grid locations, solar photo voltaic technology is one of the few means of providing electricity for homes, schools, hospitals, agriculture and small scale industry. If we are serious about reaching the least reached, RET can be an innovative way to help and demonstrate the gospel to those in the most remote locations.



Massive Global Investment

The crest of a wave

However, it's not just remote locales and the disadvantaged where RET is relevant. A second reason for enthusiasm are the international efforts to expand the industry to address global environmental issues. This also allows skilled Christians to work and mix with professionals, industrialists, politicians and academia anywhere in the world.

For instance, in spite of the recession, the EU alone spent \$211 billion dollars on RET in 2010 to comply with its commitments under the 1997 Kyoto protocol. Whether you agree with the greenhouse debate or not, air quality will be significantly improved and 3.5 million jobs created in the process.

In Asia, RET moves are also progressive. China, with its booming economy, has housed close to 200 million people over the last 20 years. In the next 12 years, the central planning committee intend to house 400 million more. For a country with a poor environmental record, this will obviously place major additional strain on the environment and existing electricity resources. To reduce this, the Chinese government is investing heavily in solar PV and is responsible for 45% of world production today.



More locally, things are happening too. The Pacific Islands will receive 600 million dollars of RET projects and infrastructure from the EU, Australia and NZ to replace traditional diesel generation. Like it or hate it, this new industry has major financial and international backing and is here to stay.

Much like evangelical mission rode the dubious coat tails of colonialism in the 1800s, Christians with the right skills and strategic spiritual mindset could discover RET is another wave crest for God to influence and reach all strata of society but also do something good for the planet.

Thirdly, such roles are exciting because we can look forward to God doing something amazing. Some might argue "what is the point of being involved in this new fan dangled stuff if there are no foreseeable or immediate church planting outcomes?!" I recall Martha being just as critical of Jesus' unorthodox instruction to remove Lazarus' tomb stone. Four days dead, he'll stink Jesus, what's the point of that! Jesus responded: "Didn't I tell you that you will see God's glory if you believe?" As we know, Lazarus came out - to God's glory. For some traditionalists new approaches might seem scary. But for those with a God-given vision, RET is just another way that the Lord will bring himself glory.

Lastly, roles like the one above are great because we can better recruit those who have a call to missions but who also want to use their professional skill set. For too long, mission agencies have appealed to a mostly narrow demographic. Mission should never have been just the preserve of itinerant preachers, evangelists, translators etc aka CT Studd types. If we remain set in this paradigm, we cannot expect more workers for the harvest and in so doing grieve the Holy Spirit. Mission is also for those who are engineers, scientists, technicians, business people etc. Instead of caution, any move towards a more dynamic and elastic expression of God in mission through individuals with diverse skills should be seen as exciting for WEC and those who will serve. But most of all, it's exciting for God.



RET: reaching those in the remotest locations

SITSVACANT

Middle East 2 years

An experienced Neo-natal Physician to work in the public hospital system alongside junior doctors.

Qualifications: Medical Doctor with training and experience in premature neo-natal care and treatment. The position is voluntary and there is no salary, 15 hours a week.

Central Asia 4 years

In this Central Asian city, several members are engaging in a real-time DVD authoring business. The company has been running for a short while, and needs IT personnel. There are currently three foreigners working with five local computer engineers.

Qualifications: IT background with management skills, and experience in computer languages and programming.

Seoul, South Korea 1 year

English-speaking teachers needed for a new residential school for Korean WEC missionaries' children. i.e. for Mathematics, Science, English, Humanities/Social Studies, Bible Education, Art, Music, Physical Education, and Elementary/Primary Teachers. Also Dorm parents (preferably 2 couples), and a Maintenance Worker.

Qualifications: English speaker with teaching qualifications and experience preferable.

North Africa 2 years

Rural Development Worker needed for NGO whose aim is to build capacity and skills of local partners. This involves: water preservation, renewal of springs, prevention of soil erosion, tree planting and intercropping to help maximise farm output and income, and educating children. You will be part of an international team with opportunities for fellowship.

Qualification: Qualifications or experience in rural development combined with good spoken English and a reasonable level of French.

These are just a few examples among numerous possibilities to serve with WEC teams. For more info visit www.wecnz.org or call us at 0800 GO INTO

More Info

TEAM OPPORTUNITY WITH WEC AUSTRALIA MEXICO



A Multi Ministry Centre that hosts various camps, retreats, training conferences etc throughout the year.

20 Sept - 8 Oct 2013

\$4,500 approx

Visit Mexico City: Pray for its people and ministries, in particular the Purepecha people. Visit El Monte Camp to pray, help and encourage the workers.

SOUTH ASIA GROUND BREAKERS WANTED! INTERCESSORS FOR NEW MINISTRY

Late October 2013 for 10-12 days

\$5,550 approx

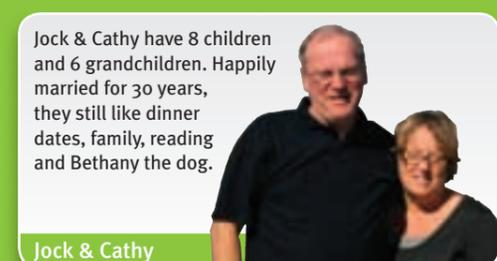
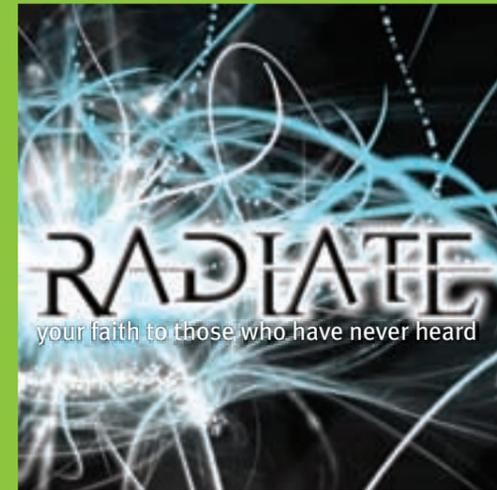
Connecting with WEC Betel (drug rehab ministry) you will pave the way for the expansion of work amongst drug addicts in new areas.



NZoutlook

Be the First!

I sometimes hear the phrase 'mission is everywhere to everywhere'. How I long for that statement to be true. But it isn't. The Gospel has not penetrated everywhere at all. The job is not yet done. There are perhaps 1.8 billion souls who have never heard it. If mission were 'everywhere to everywhere' then Jesus would come back now. He said that the Good News of the Kingdom will be preached to the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come (Matthew 24:14). The task is the whole church taking the whole Gospel to the whole world as expressed in the Lausanne Covenant. So do not be deceived - mission is many places to many places - but the greatest mission priority must be the unreached. You can still be the first to take the Gospel to people who have never heard any of it. WEC has been doing this, alongside many others - quietly, underground and at great cost - for 100 years. We aim to keep doing it until the LORD returns.



Jock & Cathy have 8 children and 6 grandchildren. Happily married for 30 years, they still like dinner dates, family, reading and Bethany the dog.

Jock & Cathy

EASTWEST BLOCKCOURSES

