

To China and Back

Highlights from My Whirlwind of a Summer

JOANNA WAGNER'S MONTHLY UPDATE

OCTOBER 2015



Dear Friend,

Just over a month ago, I returned to Kansas and to Justice For All after spending the summer in China. As I shared in my June 2015 newsletter, I've been in a serious dating relationship for over a year with a Chinese graduate student named Puyin. I went to China to better understand the place where he was raised, as well as spend time getting to know his immediate and extended family. I am very thankful that I was allowed this leave of absence from work, and I want to share with you some of the exciting opportunities I had while I was there. I hope these stories remind you to pray for China - specifically for Chinese Christians, women pressured into abortion, and women hurting from past abortions.

Xi'an: *Sharing Messages of Hope and Healing*

Xi'an was the home-base for our trip. The capital city of China during much of its history, Xi'an is now home to over 7 million people. Puyin grew up in Xi'an along with his sister, parents, and his mother's parents, all of whom I had the privilege of getting to know this summer. While there, not only did I bike along the top of the old Xi'an City Wall, take Tai Chi classes with Puyin's mom, and learn to cook delicious Chinese meals; I also was given the honor of speaking in front of two audiences with Puyin. We shared different things with each group, but in each instance Puyin was able to answer many questions people had about Christianity. The first, a smaller group of Christians and others considering Christianity, listened to us both share our very different stories of coming to know Christ as our Lord and Savior. The second was a larger group of about forty female Christians (and one man). For this group, Puyin shared reasons why we can trust the Bible's accuracy and authority. Then I shared about abortion.



We decided to hike a less traveled, unrestored section of the Great Wall. The set of stairs on the wall to the right was falling apart, so we only got about half-way up before backing down!



Puyin turned 26 during the summer. This is a picture from a birthday dinner we had with his family in Xi'an.

I had a difficult time deciding whether to speak on the topic of abortion, fearing my inadequacy as a person speaking into a very different context than my own, and speaking to so many who may have multiple abortions in their past. (China is four times the size of the U.S. but is responsible for 13 times the number of abortions, at 13 million per year in China alone.) I believe it was good that I ended up speaking on the topic, though, especially given that the group ended up being almost entirely made up of women. I was able to share the graphic truth about abortion with them using the Justice For All Exhibit Brochure. I also reiterated the truth about the forgiveness found in Christ Jesus, encouraging them to continue reminding each

other of it. Prior to preparing this presentation, one Chinese Christian woman who deeply regrets her abortion shared with me through tears, "While I know I am forgiven in Christ, I still feel like I should be punished for what I've done." Because I had heard this, I predicted that past abortion was a topic to which many Christian women in China needed to hear the Gospel directly applied. What a truth we have to share! Christ shed his own blood so that we can all be forever



JUSTICE FOR ALL - TRAINING THOUSANDS TO MAKE ABORTION UNTHINKABLE FOR MILLIONS, ONE PERSON AT A TIME.

WEB: WWW.JFAWEB.ORG

EMAIL: JOANNA.WAGNER@JFAWEB.ORG

OFFICE: 316-683-6426

cleansed from our participation in the shedding of innocent blood.

Shanghai: *A JFA Conversation Without Borders*

In July, Puyin and I both went to Shanghai to see a friend of his there and to travel nearby to visit some of Puyin's grandfather's siblings. One of the most memorable times for us there was a visit we had with a student we'd met at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in the spring. Just before we left for China, both of us took part in Justice For All seminar and outreach events in Los Angeles. At UCLA, Puyin was introduced by my co-worker Jeremy Gorr to a Chinese student who was studying for a semester in the United States. Jeremy had a tough time communicating with him, given the language barrier, and almost had given up when he remembered Puyin. After introducing them, Puyin spoke with the young man for over an hour and had the opportunity to talk with him at length about Christianity.

This young man was very open and interested and invited Puyin and I to visit him back in Shanghai during the summer. So we did! It was amazing to continue a JFA conversation in another country! We had a meal with this student and spent a whole evening talking with him. (Puyin did most of the talking!) Puyin also gave him *More Than a Carpenter* (Josh McDowell) and *Mere Christianity* (C.S. Lewis) in Mandarin Chinese. He seemed very eager to read them. Please pray that he reads these books, takes them to heart, and comes to trust Christ as his Savior and Lord. Pray also that he'd keep in contact with Puyin who was very encouraged by their time of talking.



This student from China studied at UCLA during the semester the JFA exhibit came to campus. Puyin was able to speak with him in Mandarin then, and we met up with him in China during the summer, as well!



In both of these couples, as with Puyin and I, the man is from China and the woman is from America. It was a great encouragement to get to know couples like us who are involved in significant ministry efforts in China.

Other Regions: *Ministry Happening Under-the-Radar*

Puyin and I traveled much more, visiting various different parts of China's vast geographical area. During these travels, we had the chance to visit a number of friends from the United States who are working now in China. One of these friends runs an educational daycare for unregistered children, mostly second or third children of local pastors (because of the one child policy they do not have citizenship in China and cannot attend school legally). Another has been running a safe-house for pregnant women and their unborn children for years, providing care, education, and safety from government-forced abortion. Another friend, from a team specifically reaching out to Muslim locals, is starting a safe-house like the one described above, but in a different region. I went to a prayer meeting that her team held the day I visited. That was probably one of the most encouraging days of my whole trip in China, even though I got sick! And still

another friend works with an organization that provides alternative work for women in prostitution. She leads a Bible study I was fortunate enough to attend, through which a number of these girls have recently come to faith in Christ! Their newfound joy was contagious.

There is certainly a need for more Christian workers in China, but I was very encouraged by the beautiful things I did see happening. I'd love to tell you more about these people and their ministries, but due to the sensitive nature of their work, please just contact me to learn more about partnering with them financially or in prayer.

After my return to the United States, I helped to arrange and lead Justice For All events in Kansas, including outreach at the University of Kansas at the end of September. Visit our new JFA website to read more about these and other recent JFA events (see the calendar page at www.jfaweb.org/calendar).

Thankful for your prayers and support this summer,

Joanna