

Here Am I Lord, Send Me: Speaking Truth and Making Disciples Wherever You May Be

By Deidra Simpson

"I believe! I believe your God is who you say He is!" Lucy* exclaimed as she ran down the hallway of the classroom building of the school where my husband and I served as missionaries in East Asia. As many eyes around the hallway looked at us, I hugged Lucy and gently told her how thrilled I was to learn more, and I asked her to come to our home later to share. We met Lucy at a party we'd thrown to get to know our students near the beginning of the fall semester. She wasn't actually one of our students – she was the girlfriend of one of our students. During our first conversations about religion, she made it clear that she had no interest in Christianity. She and her family were Buddhists and wanted nothing to do with Jesus. However, her boyfriend was a new Christian and he invited her to the "Exploring Religion" study we were hosting in our apartment. One night, about 6 weeks into the study, as we were talking, Lucy had shared that her roommate was missing. She was worried that the young lady was making poor choices and may be in trouble. We stopped everything and immediately prayed for her roommate. After our prayer, Lucy sat with her mouth open and a shocked look on her face. She said she'd never experienced a power like that. "I've been in the presence of many gods, but nothing like this. I know this is the God you speak of... it must be... because no other god has had that type of presence, that much power." To be honest, after the students left, our team discussed her experience to see if anyone else had felt what she did. We were disappointed in ourselves for not recognizing God's power the way she had, but we praised God for working through us even when we were numb to His presence.

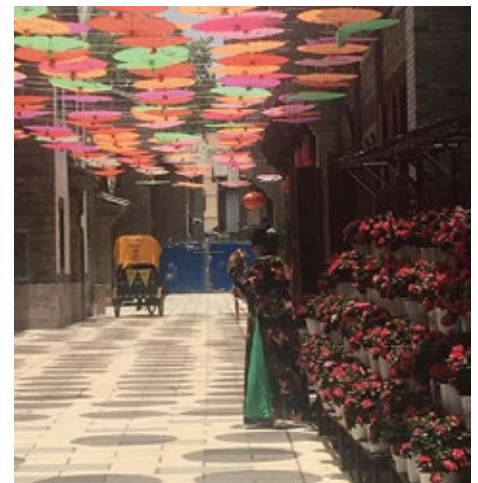
The following day Lucy told us, "I believe your God is who you say He is!" When she came to our home later that day, she told us that her roommate had safely returned, and she knew it was the result of our prayer. However, being Chinese, she was well aware that she must count the cost of following Jesus. While she understood what we had

shown her through Scripture and historical texts, she said, "How could I possibly believe in this God that I just learned existed a few weeks ago? You are asking me to give up everything, possibly my family, my future. I must learn more before I am certain that I want to follow Him." We were stunned that this young lady, who previously wanted nothing to do with Jesus, was sincerely contemplating the decision to turn her life over to Him. She knew she could not simply add Jesus to the rest of the gods of her Buddhist faith, as so many do. She knew she must choose either Buddhism or Christianity. She continued to study with us, learning more and asking questions with such depth that our knowledge grew with hers.

A few months later, Lucy met another student in our home – a Tibetan student named Dee*, who had repented and trusted in Christ, and whom we were blessed to mentor and disciple. When they met, Dee asked Lucy to share her story. Dee then shared her own story of coming to faith in Christ, which happened very quickly: when Dee heard that our Heavenly Father loves us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to die in our place – for our sins – she immediately knew she wanted to follow Jesus. She told Lucy about her own fear of telling her family of her conversion. Then she explained about the day when she and I were reading the International Mission Board's "Unengaged, Unreached People Groups Prayer Guide" together. I had shown Dee a page in the prayer book about Tibet, her people group, and she began to cry. She was even more amazed at the Lord's great love for her, that He would send foreigners to disciple her so that she could take the good news back to her family. As Dee shared this story with Lucy, Lucy was in awe.

Lucy and other students traveled home for the Chinese New Year holiday, and when they returned it was nearly Easter. Lucy excitedly came to my apartment to tell us that during the holiday break, she bravely asked her mother, "What

would you do if I decided to follow Jesus?" Amazingly, her mother gave her blessing and permitted Lucy to make her own decision on which religion to follow. Our prayers had been answered! We knew that a positive outcome like the one Lucy experienced was highly unusual. We had many other Chinese friends who wanted to follow Jesus; but due to intense family and cultural pressures, they chose not to go against the culture and disrespect their parent's wishes.



Meanwhile, Dee had a health incident that required she and her mother to stay with us. While in our home, her mother asked Dee if she was following Christianity, since she noticed her daughter's nature was different. Dee confessed that she was indeed a Christian, and her mother accepted her choice, even offering protection from the village until Dee was ready to share it there herself. God is in every detail!

It was such a gift to be a small part of their stories. While my family would love to be still in China, a security breach has kept us from returning. Coming "home" to America was hard... we dearly miss our life and relationships in China. However, God is still mightily working there, and Christians are still growing strong; there are disciples making disciples. Equally so, whatever work God gives us to do here at home is a mission field, too. He continues to

teach me the importance of trusting His guidance and listening to Him speak through His Word. He reminds me to be light and love, and to speak the truth boldly. Ephesians 6:19 (NIV) says, "Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel." In Acts 1:8 (NIV), Jesus said, "...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." That means we must share the gospel both near and far – all over the globe and in

our own backyard. Part of the journey of being a disciple is sharing Jesus with those we meet along the way. This applies to everyone, not only a career missionary. The Lord places people in our lives so that we can be "salt and light" to them, speaking truth and making disciples wherever the location may be. In Acts 8:26-40, the Lord sent Philip from Jerusalem to Gaza, and in his travels he met the Ethiopian eunuch and shared the gospel with him. We must never underestimate the purpose of where God sends us... or where He

keeps us. Will you join me in asking the Lord to open doors in our journey, that we may be disciples who make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20), that His light would shine through us (Matthew 5:14-16), and that His love would be poured out from us (John 13:34) each day?

Regardless of the destination – near or far – will you answer the call of Isaiah 6:8 (NIV), "Whom shall I send?"

*Names changed for security purposes.



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