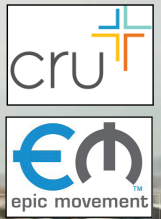


The Sillysheep Pen

Finding the lost, binding the brokenhearted



<http://www.ministryupdates.org/chau>

February 2014

Breakthrough by Joe Chau

As many of you are aware, this summer we are planning on traveling to a large city in the middle east to share the good news of Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus). Many of you have asked about this trip and what our plans are. So this month as we ask for your prayer, we'd like to just give some general sketches of the kind of work that we are hoping to engage in and how our summer fits into the larger story of what we are hoping God will do in the coming years for this city.




There are two main goals for our summer. The first is to develop relationships on campus. Over the last several years students and staff from previous summers have developed relationships with students at three area campuses. We know that at least one of these campuses are taught in English. Also another campus has 75,000 students. On campus we will develop friendships with students by taking the initiative (led by the Holy Spirit) to meet students on campus. As our students will be living in dorms, that will be another way for them to form friendships. Lastly, we will be hosting an "American Culture Club", where students are invited to explore the differences and similarities between their culture and ours. Recently, one of the students whom our students met the summer and share the good news with, has come to faith in Isa. On average it takes about 2+ years from the time someone hears the good news for the first time before they come to a point when they can make a decision.

We are also working to bring some professors with us who will be able to engage the campus on an academic and personal level. Since this is a new strategy we are asking for your prayer.

Our hope is that our professors will be invited to give a series of seminars on their area of expertise and allowed to give one or more seminars on an area of personal interest, which may include a personal testimony or a topic such as God & Science. In this way, not only will we be able to develop relationships with students, but also native faculty and administrations. It is a proven strategy (in other countries) that can open up all segments of campus at the universities that we are trying to reach.

Secondly, this summer there is also a unique opportunity for our students and staff families to work with refugees from war-torn nations from elsewhere the Middle East and Africa. Working with a local benevolence group, we will be providing, medical, nutritional and physical care for women and children. As we serve, we will be developing friendships and sharing the good news from stories found in the Injil (New Testament).



Finally our long term hope is that as we continues to send students and staff to this strategic city in the Middle East, over the next several years, we'll see students and staff from our campuses here in western Massachusetts, grow in love for the people of this city. We ask God to raise up teams of students and staff to not only go for a summer but for a year or two on STINT (Short Term INTERNATIONAL). With teams in this city year-round, the next step would be to trust God for native staff raised up, who have come to faith in Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus) and are then called to reach others on more campuses. Eventually, God willing there may be enough native staff raised up from this country so that the native staff can take full ownership of the ministry of reconciliation entrust to all of us, reaching their whole country and eventually sending laborers to other countries through out the Middle East. 

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While I was in NYC I saw a magazine from a famous national ministry with a feature article on how to share your faith. It was thorough and encouraging. And it got me thinking. What were some helpful hints that helped me get started sharing my faith. There are certainly many tips to write about, like praying that the Holy Spirit has moved on their hearts, revealed their sin, and drawn them towards Jesus. And having a prepared testimony or knowing how to use some evangelism tool. Of course, you should be familiar with (if not memorized) relevant Bible verses and know how to field some common questions. But, I'm thinking about tips that have helped me personally and hopefully you will find them helpful as well.

The **first** tip is to **RELAX**. There's often tension and nervousness associated with sharing the gospel. Often we view it is an act of confrontation. Actually, it's an act of faith. We've taken the responsibility of "saving" this person upon ourselves. Well, Christ has already done that. All I am doing is telling them how to receive a wonderful gift.

Our definition of success is simple obedience to the Holy Spirit and we leave the results up to Him. I love telling people that God loves them. A woman I approached with the gospel while in NYC was so touched that she felt chills when I told her that God loves her. She later remarked how it seems to be something that you tell children all the time, but never hear as an adult. I believe that deep down everyone, even those who are most resistant, want and need to hear that God loves them. When we share the gospel that's what we are doing.

The **second** tip is to **GO**. Often we're gripped by fear or doubt, and we don't go. We forget that we have been given a Spirit of boldness. More to the point, when we go we get to see God at work. Like taking a hike to the top of a mountain to wonder at God's creation, when we go in faith, we are taking an opportunity to be marveled by God. I have never had a bad experience when I took students out to share the gospel. The students always felt a sense of strength and excitement afterwards. There is joy in obedience and also in seeing what God has already

done in the lives of those with whom we speak. A student at Albany I knew went on a Campus Crusade "Summer Project" in Wildwood, NJ. She had been sharing the gospel one-on-one all summer on the beach, when a staff member challenged her to share the gospel with a group of people. They went out and the Lord moved on her heart to approach a group of six teenage boys. After some time sharing the gospel, all six prayed to receive Christ. That's God at work. **GO** and See.

The **third** is **LISTEN**. Never be afraid to do a little relationship building. Often we think of sharing the gospel as giving a presentation, but I find it more effective and enjoyable to have a conversation. Often people genuinely want to know how to personally know God, especially after you've taken time to listen to what's going on in their lives. Listening, also helps you answer any questions about the gospel in a way that is immediately applicable to the one you're sharing with.

The **last** tip is **INVITE**. Always give those who you are sharing with an opportunity to take the next step. Whether that's to find out more, go to a church event, make new friends with other Christians, or pray to receive Christ. We are all on our spiritual journeys and we all need to be encouraged in gentleness and humility. I remember when I was in Hong Kong, on a missions trip, during the hand over. I had the opportunity to share with a middle school girl, who asked me question after question about Jesus. They were insightful and tough. I answered as best I could, but not all my answers were conclusive. In the end, I asked her why was she asking. She said that she wanted that joy that she saw in our team. Then I asked her if she wanted to pray to receive Christ and have that joy. She asked if she had to pray the prayer in the booklet or if she could just talk to God. I smiled, "just talk to God", I said. And that's exactly what she did.

I know that these tips have helped me with my hesitation and doubts about sharing the great news of Jesus Christ. And I hope that this was encouraging to you as well. 🐻

Prayer Corner

1. Please pray for Joe and Jenny, that we would continue to experience God's overwhelming love. That we would make every effort to stay in step with the Holy Spirit.
2. Please pray for us as we seek to be wise and godly parents. Pray for our children that they will walk faithfully with the Lord all the days of their lives.
3. Pray for us to lead our team and our students in wisdom, boldness and compassion, so that our team and students will live out the gospel and experience God's grace and truth in community.
4. Please pray for us as we prepare for our summer in the Middle East. Pray that the Lord will lead us to open hearts, ready for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Pray for safe travels, and for our family and all the kids' allergies.
5. Please pray that we will have a team of 5 students and 1 or 2 faculty from UMass who will join us on Breakthrough this summer. And that the Lord would supply all our financial need as our team goes.



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