



# CHINESE CHURCH SUPPORT MINISTRIES CHINA PRAYER LETTER



**MARCH 2018**

## Rent-A-Boyfriend

This year the Chinese Lunar New Year (Spring Festival) falls on February 16th. According to the Chinese zodiac it is the Year of the Dog. The most populated nation in the world begins a mass migration back to their family homes to celebrate, creating major headaches for public transport. Most workers in China have at least a week off including three days' statutory holiday, while students take one month's break from school.

The public holiday starts on the eve of the Lunar New Year which falls in January or February. Family members traditionally wear red clothing, decorate their houses with red paper motifs, hand out red envelopes stuffed with money (hong bao) and watch dragon dance performances. The celebration lasts for 15 days from the 1st to 15th day of the first lunar month, and in traditional folklore it starts even earlier, from the 23rd day of the twelfth lunar month. For parents whose children



**In  
this  
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Rent-A-Boyfriend

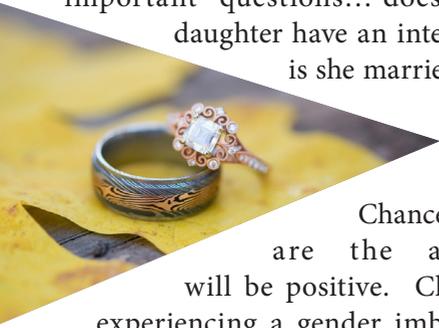
VPN - Virtual Private  
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live and work away from their home their return is keenly awaited. Friends and neighbours will likely talk about the anticipated visit asking the all-important questions..."does your daughter have an interest or is she married yet?"



Chances are the answer will be positive. China is experiencing a gender imbalance as a result of the one child policy implemented in the 1980's. There are between 30 to 40 million more men than women and predictions estimate that within the next 5 years one in five men will not be able to find a wife within China. These men will be known as *guang gun* (光棍) meaning "bare branches" It is a term used to refer to men who do not have children and add 'branches' to the family tree. Some of these men are now looking to the surrounding countries to find wives and are even raising funds to purchase a bride.

Because the gender imbalance is in the women's favour it is very likely that the daughter in question will have not one but many suitors



competing for her affections. However, for those girls who approach the age of 27 still unmarried the pressure from parents and society to find a spouse is huge. When they have reached the age of 27, unmarried women in China are labelled '*sheng nu*' or 'leftover women'.

The social stigma of being *sheng nu* still bears shame, social embarrassment and social anxiety for many women who are unmarried. Parents may feel they are losing face. The problem is exacerbated for women who have chosen to place priority on their careers over marriage.

Studies show that Chinese men are reluctant to date women who are professionally more successful than they or unwilling to give up work or both. Upward mobility and other social developments such as the increase in premarital sexual relationships have pushed the average age of marriage in China up to 27, up from 20 in 1950. This is closer to international marriage trends. In 1989, only 15% of Chinese women engaged in premarital sex but by 2013 between 60-70% had done so.

Women leaving it later to marry now are turning to an act of deception to stave off the daunting questions from a well-meaning but incredibly desperate older generation. The discomfort of seeing their parent's worried and

disappointed faces is driving women to a ruse that is fast becoming a trend. Hiring a boyfriend is a growing industry. Women can now alleviate

their parent's worries by selecting a suitable fake partner online to take home and meet the parents.

## VPN - Virtual Private Networks

On January 30 2018, the Chinese Communist Party announced that from March 31st, all unlicensed VPN operators will be blocked in China.

Only VPN operators issued with a telecommunications business license, such as the state-run communications giants China Mobile, China Unicom and China Telecom, will be permitted to

operate. The new regulations state they must use state network infrastructure.

VPNs or "Virtual Private Networks" protect individuals and businesses from having their private information leaked onto the internet. This is especially important for innovative companies that rely on secure communication to safeguard their company secrets. It is

## International Short-Term Teams

- \* English Cultural Exchange
- \* Trekking
- \* Intercession
- \* Medical
- \* Mercy

April 2018:	Cycle Team & Cultural Exchange Teams
June 2018:	Medical Team
July 2018:	Mercy Team, Summer Camps
August 2018:	Medical Team
September 2018:	Trekking & Intercession Teams



conform to Chinese regulations and remove 674 non-compliant VPN apps from its Chinese App Store. Some of the affected companies included the highly popular ExpressVPN and VyprVPN.

According to Radio Free Asia, Zhang Feng, chief engineer from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, stated: “We want to regulate VPNs which unlawfully conduct cross-border operational activities.”

“Any foreign companies that want to set up a cross-border operation for private use will need to set up a dedicated line for that purpose,” he said.

“They will be able to lease such a line or network legally from the telecommunications import and export bureau. This shouldn’t affect their normal operations much at all.”

Zhang is reported as saying that people shouldn’t be concerned that their data is insecure as a result ... neither providers nor the government are able to access content sent over a state-approved VPN service.

With these latest restrictions China’s Christians will now have little or no access to uncensored Bible teaching, news and resources from outside China.

essential if they intend to stay ahead of the competition.

A VPN can issue a PC with a fake location address outside China and thereby circumnavigates the “Great Firewall”, China’s internal internet censorship mechanism. Chinese companies use VPN to access sites blocked by the Great Firewall such as Facebook, a valuable tool for promoting and selling their product to overseas markets. VPN is frequently used to access Twitter and Gmail and other online tools and resources. Researchers use it to access Google Scholar or to hear uncensored news from offshore, and web-developers use it to access Github.

In July 2017, Apple was forced to

# A Tribute to an Awesome Young Man

*“In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” 1 Peter 1:6-9*

In late 2017 in North West China a much respected Foreign English teacher had signed a new contract that would take his China working time to an astonishing 20 plus years! His name, for the purposes of this story, is Mike.

A close friend of our organisation and key coordinator of our Cultural Exchange Programmes in his city, he is widely respected for his teaching skill and his willingness to help and encourage other teachers.

He is a teacher who believes that his first priority is to be excellent at what he does and his reputation as the BEST is well deserved!

But his life was and is more than

teaching. He has always been involved in various mercy programmes. Taking this further he and his wife had adopted/long term fostered two orphan children who became fully part of their family. Both children had serious health problems and disabilities. There were major issues to be worked through around their daily care, status and future.

What was not in doubt was the boys' acceptance of Jesus as their Saviour which was evident to all who met them. They were happy, full of personality and joy!

Soon after signing his new contract, tragedy struck this family. The older of the adopted boys became seriously ill and died after a short time in hospital. There was a great outpouring of love in their city as friends gathered around. The large funeral was attended by a cross section of society – foreign and local. 350 people came to the Memorial Service including the ICU doctor, local fruit and vegetable stall holders, the local street cobbler, five uniformed bus drivers and numerous former and current students. Those who did not share the family faith were astounded at the atmosphere of hope and joy – not at all what they had expected.

It is what followed next that is truly

inspiring and clear proof that God can and does turn bad situations to good. Whilst at the hospital to make funeral arrangements Mike met one of the doctors who had looked after his son. He said he had been touched by what Mike and his wife had done and how they had handled the death. He had heard of their faith and wanted to know more about it. Shortly afterwards he was given a copy of the Scriptures and connections to a local fellowship. He is now a regular student of the Book.

A member of the teaching staff who attended the funeral was tearfully overwhelmed by the atmosphere of love she experienced. She also wanted to know all about the one who was the reason for their joy and hope. Good consequences have since followed.

The local newspaper wrote a story about Mike and his wife. They expressed great respect for their desire to adopt not just local orphans but ones who

were physically disadvantaged. The newspaper article had a record number of hits.

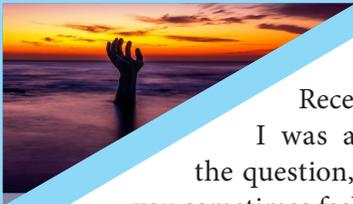
Subsequently, local TV has also filmed an interview with Mike and again it has received an enthusiastic response.

There was yet a further unexpected consequence. Mike began to get calls from students he had taught way before WeChat or texts! They had no way of keeping in touch but now started to make contact. They wanted to hear more of what had happened and why the family did what they did. Some of these students were in Mike's class 20 years ago.

This story is a remarkable testimony of the truth of the words of Peter:

*“you may have to suffer grief in all kinds of trials...”* but through faith you *“are filled with inexpressible and glorious joy.”*

## Future Proofing



Recently I was asked the question, “Do you sometimes feel that your work is just a drop in the ocean? Is it actually making a difference when there are so many problems and sad situations in the

world?” It is not possible to answer this regarding the world's millions living with poverty, fear, rejection, loneliness, illness and abuse. No one has the ability to change this but Christ himself. But I do believe that we all have an opportunity to reach out to the ones that lie at our door, that we have the power to help, or that we pass by.

# PRAYER POINTERS

## Rent-A-Boyfriend

Pray that Chinese men from the one-child policy era will be able to find suitable wives.

Pray that purchased women will be loved and valued by their Chinese husbands.

Pray that the trend to deceive parents with fake boyfriends is reversed.

Thank God that Chinese parents value marriage and want to pass that on to the next generation.

## A Tribute to an Awesome Young Man

Pray for this family as they continue to deal with the death of their much loved son.

Thank you for the certainty they have that God has a purpose for the life of their older son, who touched many in life is touching a multitude in death.

## VPN - Virtual Private Networks

Thank God for the work of David Joannes and his colleagues that brought the message of hope and life to the people of South West China.

Pray that the good work that has taken root in these tribes will grow and multiply.

Pray that more brave men will be raised up with the courage to go to the remote places in China that are still unreached and unengaged.

Ask the Father to build on the foundations that have been laid.

# PRAYER POINTERS

## Future Proofing

- Thank God for the dedication of the staff and volunteers at Morning Light.
- Pray for continued protection and favour for the Morning Light family unit and Centre.
- Pray for full emotional and psychological healing for the disabled orphans.
- Pray that God will inspire people to join AM-CCSM short term Mercy teams that can bring their expertise to help upskill the staff and volunteers.
- Pray that the Morning Light team will be a shining light to all those around them.

## News from CCSM UK

- Pray for Christians in China to stand firm in the will of God, be mature and fully assured of His love for them.
- Pray for Christians to be able to meet for fellowship, in cities, in remote rural areas and without persecution.
- Pray that we will be faithful in prayer and that Chinese Christians will be encouraged to keep going.
- Pray that our lives and theirs will reflect Jesus and draw non-believers to Jesus.



**Chinese Church Support Ministries**

Seeking to serve, strengthen  
and support the church and  
the people of China

AM-CCSM has long supported the work of Morning Light. This was founded in 2005 when a couple from New Zealand made the choice not to walk on by, but rather to stay and help some of China's most vulnerable...a small group of disabled orphans. However, it's one thing to have your heart go out to disabled children while they have the charm of youth, it's quite another to care for them into their old age. Ongoing care for a lifetime requires dedication, forward thinking and succession planning.

Ever since its inception by the New Zealand couple and subsequent handover to local Chinese workers the goal has always been to find and upskill staff and volunteers to ensure the future is secure for the members of the Morning Light family unit. This is a daunting task when you are relying on the charity of others. The future of this group now relies heavily on the vision and careful management of one special lady, who we will call Violet.

The greatest challenge according to Violet in working with Chinese Community Services is that there is still a mindset that believes disabled people are not valuable or capable. And so the disabled children also think they are like that. Violet's goal is to change this belief not only in the children's minds but also in the minds of staff, management and authorities.

Between 2006 and 2013 the team worked with the small group of 6 orphans in a



family unit within an orphanage. Violet saw the transformation in their lives as they started to release the pain of being abandoned or being born disabled and came to understand there is a Father who always loves them. But there are many others in the orphanage who are not able to hear the message of God's love.

In 2013, the children were moved to a Welfare Home (which cater largely for the elderly), and the future looked dim for the young orphans. But Violet's team followed and were given permission to continue their work. There they have had opportunity to share with the older disabled orphans, whom are aged 15 -25. They have helped with rehabilitation and training for over 35 young people in the Welfare Home. "We can't talk about Him openly, we could be shut out from the Welfare Home. We love and care for them firstly, we build relationship with them, we pray for them and teach them stories about Him."



As well as their obvious physical challenges, because they are orphans and disabled, some of them have psychological problems. Violets says, “We pray for them and try our best to help them. But we also need experts to help us and guide us.” AM-CCSM short-term mercy teams are always grateful for experts in this field that can offer advice and training to the Morning Light workers. “We need help from experts experienced with disabled orphan youth. We don't have any financial support from government, we raise donations from different areas.” The donations “wishlist” includes such simple basics as art paper, rice and books through to wheelchairs, walkers and computers.

AM-CCSM short mercy teams visit the orphans and Violet particularly welcomes team members who have expertise in physiotherapy, occupational therapy, job training and medical knowledge in the field of disabilities.

In addition Violet says, “Team members can encourage our staff

team. They can offer a good social experience to our disabled orphan students. Team members can be the bridge between Morning Light and overseas churches. They can also bring back the handcrafts made by our students to help raise funds. And teams can provide good English oral practice partners for our university volunteers.” There are plenty of things team members can bring to promote the intellectual and physical development of the handicapped youth’s lives, such as painting class, dancing lessons and educational games. Whatever it is that team members bring and share will be rewarded many times over by the enrichment they receive back from this unique and wonderful group of young people.

Now Violet has a skilled and dedicated team around her. This “Earthly advocate” for these young disabled people can rest assured that the future holds both light and hope.



# News From CCSM UK

*Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.*  
Colossians 4:12

*Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.*  
Luke 18:1

*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Chinese New Year started in February, so we are still in the early part of a new year. Rather than dwell on resolutions, we should encourage each other to keep

going and not give up.

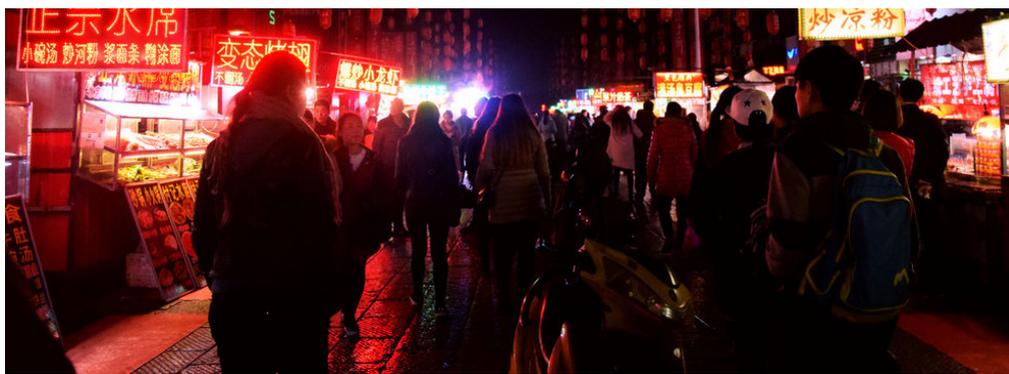
The verses above all encourage and challenge us to pray, and not stop.

We should wrestle in prayer, implying an on-going, effort needed, determined, persevering activity. Our Chinese brothers and sisters will be blessed as we pray in this way, and the verse also gives us words to pray “that they may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured”.

How about praying that at the start of each day?

Jesus' words “that we should pray and not give up” are demonstrated in a parable, in Luke 18 of the persistent widow, have a look if you don't remember the details.





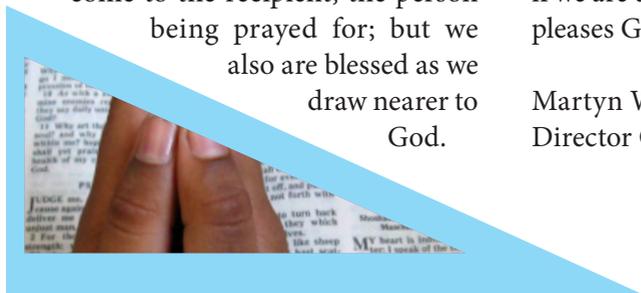
Then in Thessalonians we have the triple encouragement of rejoice, pray, give thanks. Our praying should not be all just asking, but should be including rejoicing in what God has done, rejoicing in who He is and will do. We also need to give thanks, for many things but especially for His faithfulness and His grace and mercy towards us and all mankind.

The blessing of praying does not just come to the recipient, the person being prayed for; but we also are blessed as we draw nearer to God.

As we pray we take time to consider God, to appreciate His presence and remember what He has done in our lives. Often in prayer we realise we are blessed in the relationship we have with the living God, our heavenly Father.

Finally, we also identify with our Chinese brothers and sisters as part of the worldwide church, we share with them to some extent in our prayers and if we are united with them, we know that pleases God.

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