



CHINESE CHURCH SUPPORT MINISTRIES

CHINA PRAYER LETTER



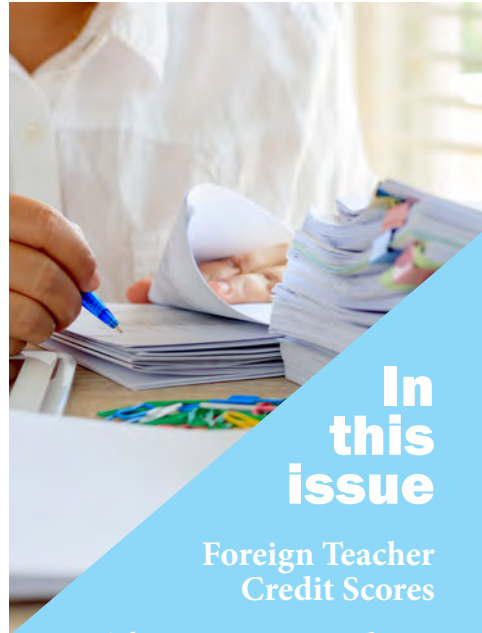
NOVEMBER 2020

Foreign Teacher Credit Scores

Preaching and proselytising have never been permitted in PRC classrooms. Yet teachers have played a major role in China missions. Over the last two decades sharing has occurred discreetly, usually outside of the classroom, and authorities seldom saw a need to enforce the religious law. It was not uncommon for teachers to discuss religious aspects of Western public holidays with their students, or to use Bible stories in their teaching, or to answer questions asked by students regarding their faith.

There is no doubt that Christians have made up a good portion of China's foreign teachers, of which there were 400,000 working in education in 2017. In fact, in the less desirable regions or remote locations, it was often the 'crazy' Christians who would give up the luxury and convenience of the big cities to work in poor areas for low pay, rough accommodation and few perks. Some would even volunteer!

Now, in the new era, both propaganda against religion



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

and mistrust of foreign influence have been whipped up. Religious regulations were tightened in 2018 and their implementation has had a strong focus in schools. Cameras have been placed



in classrooms, student's phones are checked to see if they have any religious leanings, and teacher's conversations with students are monitored - even outside the schools in some cases. Students are heavily pressured to reject religion. Questions or debate around faith in the classroom - despite being initiated by students - are likely to have repercussions on a teacher's career. University students are no longer allowed to visit their lecturer's apartments, a common occurrence in the past where they would often enjoy language practice, cooking, cultural exchanges and have opportunities to ask about matters of belief. Although this stranglehold on religion in schools and universities has greatly impacted Christian work, many mission-minded believers still value teaching as a pathway to gaining employment in China and being able to reach Chinese. Because of growing political tensions, many teachers have reconsidered returning to China after the pandemic, but others still see the great need to work while it still remains possible. And being a foreigner creates unique opportunities to discuss

the 'Western' faith with friends and inquirers.

Because English is the trade language of much of the developed world, demand is strong in China for native English-speaking teachers. Yet, disturbingly for parents, one-third of foreign educational workers in 2017 were employed illegally, either without the required qualifications or a correct visa, according to Xinhua. To work lawfully in China, foreigners must have a Z visa, a work permit, a criminal background check, and English teachers should hold a TEFL certificate (or two years of work experience). In many cases educational facilities were not able to attain the correct work permit for their teachers because they themselves were not permitted education facilities. In other cases, remote schools with smaller budgets struggled to attract teachers and so accepted applicants without the qualifications required by law.

Whatever loophole employers or teachers found to avoid the requirements, there have always been consequences such as fines, detentions and deportations if caught. But in July this year draft regulations were published that will incentivise all educational facilities to be more proactive in policing their foreign staff's compliance - as well as their own compliance. The new regulations, titled "Measures for the Appointment and Management of Foreign Teachers" specify fines of up to 10,000 yuan per person to institutions where the rules are not being followed. Authorities can halt

enrolments or revoke the school's permit if the infringements are serious.

In addition to itemizing the requirements for foreign teacher qualifications, permits and filing processes, the new regulations also establish a National Comprehensive Information Service Platform for Foreign Teachers to be managed centrally by the State Council's Education Administrative Department. The department will establish standards for foreign teachers' filing and will issue each teacher with a foreign teacher record number. Teachers will have a credit record score that measures their integrity in abiding by Chinese law and contractual agreements, the quality of their education, teaching, and ethics.

The regulations list four circumstances (academic misconduct or violations of their contracts) that need to be reported and will affect a teacher's credit score. It also lists 10 circumstances whereby the teacher must be reported and dismissed. Among these are included expressing "words and deeds that



damage China's national sovereignty, security, honour, and public interests; obstructing the implementation of the education policy; engaging in religious education or preaching illegally; and engaging in cult activities. As the subjective interpretation of these rules is determined by the CCP it would lead teachers to exercise caution in all their conversations and activities both in and out of school.

International Short-Term Teams

Email CCSM at
teams@amccsm.org to
find out what we have on offer.

The Woman Caught in Adultery

One has to chuckle at the irony.

A Chinese textbook teaching ethics has been ‘caught in the act’ of flat out lying. The book in question was issued to students at secondary vocational schools and takes a quote from the tale of Jesus and the woman caught in adultery. This well-known Bible story is the one in which Jesus says, “He who is without sin cast the first stone”. Even secular folk are likely to have heard that famous line...although most might not know the details. Which was probably the expectation of the textbook author who chose to take the liberty of rewriting the end of the story. His purpose, it seems, was to realign Jesus teaching to backup socialist ideology.

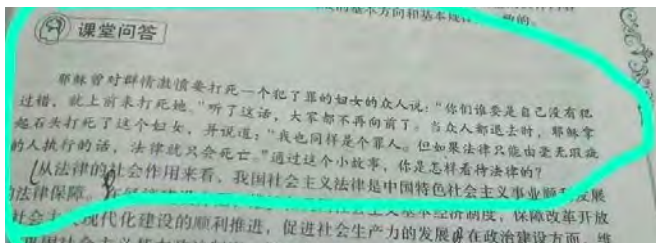
Here is a brief overview of the actual biblical account in John chapter 8. The religious leaders, hoping to trap Jesus, brought him a difficult legal case. A woman had been caught in the act of adultery and under the Mosaic Law, those who committed this sin were to be stoned to death. However, the Israelites were under the control of Rome at this time and the Jewish religious leaders were not permitted the legal right to exact the death penalty. The woman was brought before Jesus and He was asked what he had to say. Jesus bent down and wrote in the dirt. (Some people make the assumption he may have been writing a list of sins...) He stood up and

announced, “Whoever among you is sinless, may be the first to throw a stone at her.” Beginning with the oldest, they drifted away one by one until only Jesus remained with the woman. He said to her, “Woman, where are your accusers? Did no one condemn you?” She replied, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more.”

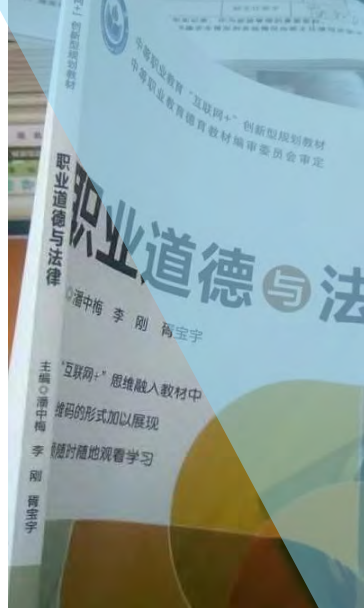
The textbook version has a very different conclusion. Rather than Jesus sending the women off as a free woman, he stones her to death! He explains, “I, too, am a sinner, but if the law could only be executed by men without sin, the law would be dead.”

The text book titled “Ethics And The Law” sought to teach professional ethics to students. It missed other relevant points that could have been discussed in this story. Mosaic law requires two or three witnesses. And one might question why the other partner in this crime of adultery was not brought to account - as is also required by Mosaic law.

Ultimately, it seems that the textbook’s author could not make Marxist atheism fit with a divine and sinless Christ, or align socialist rule of law with the concept of forgiveness, or match historical accuracy with socialist ethics for that matter! So unfortunately, the woman had to die.



What is not amusing is the fact that this book was reviewed and sanctioned by a provincial education authority and possibly even a central authority. Its distortion of the Bible fuels concerns around the expected retranslation of the Bible. In November 2019 Wang Yang, Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, stated that religious authorities must follow President Xi's instructions and interpret the ideologies of different religions in accordance with 'the core values of Socialism' and 'the requirements of the era'. This 're-evaluation' of religious books was to prevent 'extreme thoughts' and 'heretical ideas' from eroding the country.



Minority's Conversion Banned

Dai peoples living in Yingyang county of Dehong Dai and Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan have been told they are not allowed to convert to Christianity according to rights group Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW). New 'village rules' have been introduced by the local authorities that exact severe penalties on those that decide to follow Jesus.

The Dai Minority are a group made up of more than ten language groups scattered throughout Yunnan and Sichuan Provinces. Those in Yingjiang county, known as Tai Mao, Kang or Northern Tai, and they share a border of 214.6 km

(133.3 mi) with Kachin State, Myanmar. In the year 2000, the Dai people were said to be largely unreached despite the many Christian churches in Myanmar's adjacent Kachin Province. It's estimated that around 90% of the Kachin people there have a Christian faith. However 85% of Myanmar nationals practice Theravāda Buddhism and other faiths are severely discriminated against.

A decades long conflict has dragged on between Myanmar's northern Kachin State (defended by its own Kachin Independence Army (KIA)), and the Burmese Army. More than 100,000 Kachin (also called Jingpo)

德宏傣族景颇族自治州



Dehong Prefecture is considered an entry point for drugs into China and no doubt narcotic needles played a part in Dehong's historically being named the "epicentre of China's HIV/AIDS epidemic".

Christians have largely neglected to bring the gospel of Jesus to the Dai. In the 1940s John Kuhn, husband of Isobel Kuhn, preached among the Dai in neighbouring Longling county. He reported that there were "some fifty thousand people right on that spot and without a single witness to the Gospel....We preached to a group in a home...a young lad in his late teens raised his hand to say 'I will let the Saviour in.'... I sat and gazed at the young Kang as the first convert in all that area!"

have been displaced in the fighting and some have fled across the border into China taking their faith. Since 2009, the fighting has been further fuelled by 18 joint venture projects between the Myanmar government and China in the Kachin province, including the Myitsone hydroelectric dam that has already seen 12,000 Kachin people relocated. The project has been stalled for a number of years.

In 1993, 34 people received Christ after a short-term mission team travelled from Taiwan to Dehong. And FEBC Christian radio has faithfully been broadcasting over the region in the Dai language for several years.

But now, there is reason to wonder if the number of Christians may have increased. Could this be why the local authorities have thought

PRAYER POINTERS

Foreign Teacher Credit Scores

Praise God that He loves and cares for each and every soul in China and longs for them to know of His salvation.

Thank God for the foreign teachers who have left their homes and countries to faithfully serve in China.

Pray for young believers in China that they will have access to the Word of God and that they will have a hunger for truth.

Pray that the Father will direct China's mission hearted teachers to divine appointments and that He will encourage them daily in their work.

The Woman Caught In Adultery

Thank God for His wonderful grace, freely given to all who recognize Him as Lord and repent.

Thank God for His blood shed on the cross which has fully paid the price for our sin.

Pray that this message will be shared far and wide in China for all to hear.

Minority's Conversion Banned

Pray for FEBC, translators and all those working to bring the gospel to the Dai Minority Group.

Pray for displaced Kachin Christians who have managed to flee to China. Pray for their safety and that they will find opportunity to preach Jesus.

Thank God that our faithfulness to Him is worth so much more than a 300-pound pig! Ask Him to repay 100 times what has been taken from the brave Dai who do not deny Him.



PRAYER POINTERS

Long Term Faith

“For it was You who created my inward parts; You knit me together in my mother’s womb. I will praise You because I have been remarkably and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, and I know this very well.” [Psalm 139:13] The term ‘inward parts’ is interpreted from a Hebrew word meaning ‘kidneys’. This term was often used to refer to emotions and moral character. The NET version translates this word as ‘heart and mind’.

Thank God that He is constantly thinking about those He has created and longs for faithful relationship.

Praise God that He is able to make all things new.

Pray for faithful workers and praise God that He can multiply what we bring him - more than we can ever imagine!

News From CCSM UK

Please pray for Christians in China to have a fresh sense of hope in Jesus.

Pray that this sense of hope would be contagious and many people in China, especially those who have no hope in life, will find hope through Jesus.

Continue to pray for Chinese churches that they will have wisdom in teaching and encouraging their congregations in a climate of fear and opposition.

Pray also for your own church, that more believers will be drawn to pray and support the people and church of China.



Chinese Church Support Ministries

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

it necessary to issue rules to prohibit new conversions to Christianity? The village rules were introduced in Huang Fei village, Yingjiang County, decreeing that anyone who converts to Christianity will face financial penalties or even the confiscation of their land.

The notice was believed to have been posted in early September, stating that the traditional faith of the Dai community is Buddhism, and that Christianity is an “evil cult.” It goes on to state that if anyone violates the rules of the village by “believing in Jesus Christ and other sects,” they must pay a financial penalty to the community, such as one pig weighing more than 300 pounds, a considerable

fine in the community, which comprises mostly farmers. CSW’s source said, “This is not only the case in this village, but also in many other Dai villages in the surrounding area, including Ruili County, although some rules are written down and some are unwritten.”

In China’s south eastern Hainan Province similar rules were issued in the Li minority villages that allowed villagers to isolate and target Christian individuals and families and impose financial penalties. The rules happened to be introduced simultaneously to the Dai rules, sparking fear of a unified arrangement on behalf of provincial authorities.

Long Term Faith



We live in a generation that expects prompt service, fast food, speedy delivery, and instant results. But just a quick look back in China’s history will show that results in mission work usually take time - in God’s kingdom things happen in due season. A harvest seldom comes without ploughing, sowing, and tending, and the measure of the crop can depend on the quality of its tending.

Inspiring news has arrived from China from a group whose dedicated work over many years is beginning to see a harvest. This group has humbly and faithfully served a group of disabled orphans, valuing, enriching, and inputting into their lives as the children grew toward becoming young adults.

In China, an orphan is transferred from their orphanage to a welfare home if they have not been adopted by the age of fourteen. After this, they are no longer eligible for adoption. Welfare homes are often very large and predominately



care for the aged and mentally ill.

Moving from their friends and their orphanage is a great upheaval, especially so for the disabled. One orphan recalled, “I still clearly remember that first day, I was crying while having lunch. Why did I cry? I cried because I didn’t know this place and the people here.” Life in a welfare home can be unstimulating and lonely for these young teens. They do not have the opportunity to attend school and may not get the same support for their disabilities they could have received with the advantage of parents.

Although the group began its work in an orphanage, it later followed some of the orphans to a welfare home and established a ‘family unit’ with them there. They continued to love and educate the orphans, teaching them computing skills and crafts, and caring for them physically and spiritually. Forgiveness

and restoration feature on this journey and a sense of belonging and approval.

Now, other disabled students from outside the home have been invited to join in the learning and craft making. One young attendee commented, “Over the past two years, I have had the chance to study at the welfare home. In fact, I think my happiest thing is to be able to meet the teachers and join the handcraft making group. I also met a heavenly friend there. So, I am very grateful to the teachers.”

This year, the group has been unable to visit their students due to the coronavirus. Strict precautions have been in place at the welfare centre to protect its residents. Communication with the teachers has only been possible via internet or smartphone, something that not all the disabled orphans have the ability to do. Luckily, through

their crafts, with help from the group to sell them, some of the students had raised enough money to buy a smartphone.

Finally, last month they were overjoyed to see their teachers' familiar faces after a brief visit was permitted. A student later wrote, "As soon as I saw them, my heart became very excited. I have been thinking about this moment so often - When will I see the teachers again?" Today is the happiest, most unforgettable day in the year!"

Faithful relationship is at the heart of the gospel. The long term and faithful work of this group is now being passed on by those it has blessed. The greatest news of all is that the students have also become the teachers. A new pupil declared, "I will not forget the friends around me, I want to say to them:

"Thank you both for helping me over the past two years, especially for helping me improve in my handcraft skills."

News from CCSM UK



Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching. [Hebrews 10:23-25]

For many of us the pandemic has forced us to 'not meet together' at least not face to face. This has been very difficult for some people and has increased a sense of loneliness and isolation. Perhaps for some of us it has been a real taste of how Christians in China face restrictions in meeting together? However we continue to have a freedom to openly share the Gospel, meet (socially distanced) and buy Bibles online and from local book shops, which is in contrast to China.

These verses in Hebrews, again refer

to God's faithfulness (my theme two months ago), and encourage us to spur each other on in love and good deeds. Sometimes this can be done over a phone call, by a message, even if face to face remains a challenge. If you can, please encourage one another to continue in prayer for China; that Chinese Christians can meet together, that their love and good deeds would demonstrate Jesus and so result in more new believers. That as the Chinese government claims that the only hope is through belief in the government, Christians would



speak and demonstrate of the true hope to be found in Jesus. There are reports of increasing depression in China, especially amongst young people, please pray that those who feel they have no hope will find hope in Jesus.

Not sure how to encourage others to pray for China? Let me know and I can send extra copies of the monthly

China Prayer Letter, or a link to receive it by email.

Contact me if I can help by sharing at your church, perhaps a prayer meeting or mission meeting and that could be 'virtually' if your church uses Zoom or a similar technology. I'm very happy to share about China, give ideas for prayer and answer questions about what Christians face in China today.

God Bless

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