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San Ming Times

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Greeting from the Unique City of San Ming, China,

One of my friends sent me a list of ten questions. I thought that you might be interesting in reading my response.

When you arrived at the Children's home how did you feel?

When I arrived in China I felt a little homesick, but the excitement of actually being in China far outweighed homesickness. It was not until about the third day that my homesickness returned. After three months the reality of my home in China reached my brain and my homesickness started to subside.

How did the children and the Chinese people treat you?

In China I am treated like a celebrity. It is hard to walk the streets without everyone looking. I went to visit school and the students crowded around me and tried to practice their English, they also wanted my signature. When I go downtown I even have some people trying to sneak pictures with their camera phones. After one week of being a celebrity I really hated it.

Do you like the food, and is the food better then before you left?

I have grown to love Chinese dumplings. I also love the Peking duck even though it tastes better in America, and I cannot forget the delicious sweet and sour pork. Chinese foods here are mostly stir fried and thus have a lot of grease. I have grown to really love American food, after 6 months of eating greasy foods. Here in Chinese they even stir fry the vegetables.

Is there any hard times that you thought you might have with your spiritual life?

So far my time in China has been good for my spiritual growth. Of course there are still strong temptations to forget my convictions. Why be a strong Christian, No one is looking, who cares if you do not spend time with God, No one will even know etc... these thought will plague a fellows mind no matter where he is, but here in China being away from family and spiritual brothers it takes more guts to say NO to such thought. I have grown spiritually I think because now my spiritual growth depends 100% on me. Before I relied a little bit on the Christians around me (Preachers, teacher, friends, etc) My Pray life has defiantly improved getting more earnest, and more sincere.

Since being in China what new and exciting things did you learn?

O, my where do I start. I have learned a lot of new stuff in China. Talk to me personally for more details.

What drove you to go to china as a missionary?

No one drove me to China I flew. When I was 15 years old my family went to Cambodia for 4 months. These months in Cambodia were an eye opener experience. I remember going to a village out back in

the Cambodia jungle. We were helping build a school without power tools. While we were building this school you could see hundreds of children watching us. When I was little my heroes were men like Brother Andrew, George Muller, Eric Lidell, Hudson Taylor, the stories of these people helped shape and prepare me for my venture into China.

For someone wants to be a missionary like you, what would you tell them?

I would say Prepare. I left high school already to jump and the next plane for Asia and to start my Asian orphanage. I took the wisdom of those older than me and waited for several years. I am glad I did because if I would have left for Asia right after high school without any really strong tests to my spiritual convictions. I would also tell that person the following info.

- a. Are you being a missionary in your own neighborhood? If not then you will not be a missionary overseas.
- b. If you are going to a different culture have a general knowledge about that culture and language. With my Dads line of work I got to visit many different Chinese people and through this it helped prepare me for the Chinese culture.
- c. Have a strong vision and plan of why you are going overseas. I have watched some people's lives and dollars wasted, because some missionaries thought they could just jump on a plane and witness overseas without a proper planning and vision.
- d. Prayer support is a MUST. I could not be here if it was not for the support of my brothers and sisters back home.
- e. You are going to love the people not change the culture. So what if that spit on the public bus.
- f. Know how to cook your own native food.

What do you do at the Children's Village?

My list of responsibilities is rather interesting. I am a house parent, a father, a big brother, a repairman, an English teacher, a cleaning adviser, a student, a prayer warrior, a woodshop teacher and coordinator, and the list goes on. My primary role is taking care and training 8 boys to be the best young men that they can be. I also spend a lot of time tutoring my 74 children in English.

Do you like being in China?

Yes, I love being in China, but of course I miss America.

Blessings and More,

Stephen Burkholder

PS: Thanks for reading!!!