

How God Used Mao Tse Tung

by Paul Kaufman

The sermon illustrates how God utilized Mao Zedong's regime to prepare the ground for a spiritual awakening in China despite significant challenges.

Duration: 50:24

Scripture: Genesis 1:1

Topics: "China"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares several stories to illustrate the concept that we often cannot determine what is truly good or bad in our lives. He tells the story of a family whose son breaks his leg, which initially seems like bad luck, but later turns out to be fortunate as it prevents him from joining a bandit army. Another story is about a woman who suffers severe injuries from a rock quarry accident, but miraculously survives after praying to Jesus for help. The preacher emphasizes that God's plan is never delayed or deterred, and references Nebuchadnezzar's realization that God does according to His will. The sermon concludes with the reminder that no one can stop the hand of God.

Transcript

The purpose of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit then is to produce a tremendous spiritual harvest. And that's what we're seeing in our world today, in the most unlikely spots in the world. Now in China, we are seeing that harvest come to pass at this present moment, in spite of the fact that all of the outside circumstances seem to be mitigating against a spiritual harvest.

Take for instance the fact that that is a communist country, run by a Marxist atheistic government. A government who has no knowledge of God. Take for instance the fact that that country is a country where no missionaries have served for 30 some years.

Where it is impossible to send an evangelistic crusade and yet in spite of all of the impossibilities, God is giving us a spiritual harvest such as none of us could ever have dreamed of or none of us had faith to believe for in all of the days of missionary service. Now in order to tell you what God is doing, I have to go a little bit into the background and so I'm going to have to talk fast. 150 years ago, the first protestant missionary arrived in China by the name of Robert Morrison.

From that time on, the missionaries, which came from all over the western world to China to preach the gospel, found it very tough going. The reason is very simple. China had been without the gospel through

most of its long history.

The modern history of China goes back 5,000 years. At the time Christ hung on Calvary's cross, there were more Chinese living in the world than any other kind of people. It was the largest country in the world at that point in time.

Jesus said to the disciples, go into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature. They did not do it. There is no record that any missionary, that any disciple, that any emissary of the cross of Christ reached China until almost 700 years after the great commission was given.

As a result, the country has been steeped in animism, in spiritism. It's been steeped in humanism through all of those long centuries so that when the missionary arrived, there were tremendous barriers to the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The communists came to power in 1949.

The missionaries were forced out of the country. What had happened as a result of 150 years of missions? More money had been poured, missionary money, into China than any other country in the world. There should have been.

It was the largest country in the world. More missionaries had gone to China than any other country in the world, as there should have been. But what was the result? At the end of 150 years of missions, we were able to count approximately four million Christians among the 450 million peoples of China, and only one million of them were Protestants, and only a small percentage of them could be considered evangelicals after 150 years of missions.

Not a very great numerical success story, but it was a success story because God had sent the missionaries to preach the gospel. God had sent the missionaries to translate the Bible into the Chinese language, without which no church can subsist for any period of time. God had sent the missionaries to sow the seed, to plant the church, and they were successful in doing that.

That's what God sent them to do. In addition to that, the missionaries were successful in training a few nationals for leadership. That was difficult.

There are many reasons for that. It was difficult in China to preach the gospel. So there was only a little small group of Christians in that land of China after 150 years of missions.

And when the missionaries left the land of China, they said, we didn't prepare the church for this. We didn't know this was going to happen. We didn't believe this would ever happen.

And they certainly didn't believe what was yet to happen, when every church would be closed and every Bible would be taken away from the Christians. They hadn't prepared the church in China for those eventualities, and they left with sad hearts, wondering if the church in China would ever survive. The missionaries faced many obstacles, and I'm going to review them very briefly for you, not as an excuse, but as a fact of history.

The missionaries faced the obstacle of transportation. How do you get from point A to point B to go into all the world and preach the gospel? Not only was it a three, four-month journey to get to China, but once you got into China, sometimes it's a three-month journey to your mission station. My father in 1907 went to the borders of Tibet.

His mission station was 90 days by muleback from the nearest public transportation. How are you going to evangelize the world by muleback? How are you going to take the gospel to the largest nation of the world when one of the favorite means of transportation was the commercial wheelbarrow? I'm not very old, but I've traveled on commercial wheelbarrows and oxcarts and pony carts and horseback and everything else through that vast land of China, and it's as big as the United States. So just taking the gospel was an enormous task, because there was no public transportation to speak of.

Few roads. Railroads, yes, but they were built by the Germans and maintained by the Chinese. When the schedule said the train would leave at 12 o'clock, it forgot to tell you whether that was noon or midnight or today or tomorrow.

You never knew. They were not a very reliable means of transportation. There was a problem of languages.

There were 300 major languages in China, and when God called you to China as a missionary, you better find out what part of the country he's calling you to, because when you spend four to five years learning the language, you're stuck in that particular geographic area. There was the problem of illiteracy. The average person in China could not read and write.

Even when I left China, still only 20% of the people could read and write. It's difficult to establish the church with people who can't read and write. Not impossible, but very difficult.

And how do you develop leadership among the people who can't go to the Bible for their daily bread themselves? There was the problem of the religions of China, which had gotten such a strong foothold during the years that the church failed to take the gospel to the largest nation in the world. There were enormous problems in the nation of China, which made the preaching of the gospel very difficult. And as a result, the hillsides of China are pockmarked with the graves of thousands of missionaries who gave their lives and their wives and their children to preach the gospel in the land of China.

My father is buried there. My sister is buried there. It was an enormous price that was paid to plant the cross in the nation of China.

And only a million Christians after 150 years of mission. But you see, God has a plan. And God's plan is never deferred or deterred or delayed.

God's program is always on schedule. Do you remember what Nebuchadnezzar said after he spent his seven years in insanity? Chained like an ox into the field, he gathered the people together and he said, folks, I've learned a lesson that I sure didn't know before. I've learned that God does according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or even ask, what doest thou? And I declare to you, it's still true, my friends, that no one can stay the hand of God.

And certainly many have tried. What happened when the missionaries left China? Communistic, atheistic government took over in the nation of China. A man by the name of Mao Zedong was determined to transform the country of China and make it into what it once had been, one of the greatest nations of the world.

Your ancestors and mine were primitive peoples in Europe. China was the most progressive nation of the world of that day. Mao Zedong was determined to create a new kind of Chinese man.

He called it a socialist man. He described that socialist man in a lecture, which he gave in my hometown in Qingdao in North China in 1937, as the man who would live not for himself, but for others. That's a noble goal.

It sounds very Christian. And that was his goal, to create a whole nation of people who would live unselfishly, not for themselves, but for others. All of the propaganda, all of the education, all of the brainwashing, all of the torture, all of the imprisonment, all of the labor camps, everything, all of his writings that he did, and certainly more of his writings were published than any other man in history, save the Bible itself.

All of that was aimed at creating a new man. And so Mao Zedong sent his emissaries out over China to declare the new gospel, the gospel of Marxist-Leninist Mao Zedong thought. It became known as Marxist-Leninist Mao Zedong thought, a combination, a signification of some of the concepts of Marxism.

And I must remind you that Marxism is the ideology, but communism is only one's interpretation of that ideology. So it differs from every country to the other and with every communist leader of the world. And so Mao was teaching Marxist-Leninist Mao Zedong thought, the signification of the concepts of Marxism that he felt would fit the nation of China.

He sent his emissaries, his missionaries, if you please, out over China to preach the gospel. They came back and said, sir, I've just ridden for 90 days on the back of a mule to get to a distant village in Tibet to tell them about this new gospel. We'll never get the job done unless we've got some better means of transportation.

Mao Zedong said, I'll fix that. And he put the whole nation of China, millions and millions of people like ants, he gave them picks and shovels and a wicker basket and said, now build roads. And he set them to work building roads all over the nation of China until that land today is crisscrossed with roads where there has never been roads before.

Even up into the mountainous areas of Tibet, there are roads. There are roads up over the roof of the world into Nepal, into Afghanistan. There are roads all over China today.

They're in pretty good shape because they haven't been able to afford automobiles or trucks or anything else, but the roads are there. During 30 years Mao Zedong built more railroads than was built at that period of time than all the rest of the world put together. Oh, there were reasons for it to spread his ideology, to be militarily prepared by an, of an attack by the Soviet Union.

But what I want you to realize is that God used Mao Zedong to build those means of transportation across the nation of China. And when he got the roads built, he died and his philosophy died with him. The men came back to Chairman Mao and they said, Mr. Mao, we can't spread this gospel over China.

Everybody speaks a different language, 300 major dialects, thousands of minor dialects. One village cannot understand the other 40 miles outside the city of Shanghai. They speak a completely different language.

How are we going to evangelize China with the gospel of Marxist-Leninist thought? And Mao Zedong said, we'll change all that. We'll force everybody in China to learn one language. Now under a democracy, that's very difficult as they are trying to do in Canada and other countries.

That's very, very difficult. But under a dictatorship, it's fairly simple. You merely point a gun at a man's head and you say, learn! He doesn't have any choice.

And so the people in China were forced to learn one common language. They didn't have to give up their colloquial dialects, but they all had to learn one common language. Every school, all of the educational system, all the governmental systems, all the way through China were taught one common language.

Now the question is, out of the 300, which common language should we teach the people? Now that was a very, very important decision because naturally he's going to get opposition from whoever he doesn't choose. And perhaps the wisest decision that Chairman Mao ever made was the decision to select the dialect spoken around the city of Peking, which was not his dialect, but it's called Mandarin or Putonghua. It became, the Peking dialect became the national language of China.

Now that was a very wise decision because that's the language that I learned as a boy in China. And now thanks to Mao Zedong, everybody in China speaks my language or the other way around. And I've been able to travel all over China and speak to people and they all understand me and I understand them.

Isn't that a marvelous provision? But think how much easier it's going to be to preach the gospel in China when everybody speaks one language. We broadcast, that is Asian outreach, does a hundred times a week in the mainland China. And thank you Mao Zedong, we don't have to use 300 languages.

We use one language and reach everybody in China. Praise the Lord. Thank you Mao Zedong.

You understand, he was like all men, a tool in the hands of God, like Pharaoh before him, like Nero before him, like Pilate before him. He was only a tool in the hands of God to accomplish not Mao's plan, but God's plan. Let me say this, that Mao Zedong failed to accomplish a single one of his major goals.

He died a failure and everybody in China today knows it. Secondly, Mao Zedong succeeded in accomplishing everything that God wanted him to accomplish. Kind of frustrating for Mao.

But that's what happens when you fight against God. You can't win. Mao Zedong looked at the situation of the religions of China, which were a tremendous obstacle to the spread of the gospel of Marxist-Leninist Mao Zedong thought.

And he said, we'll wipe those religions out of the country. We'll destroy all the temples, all the altars. And he sent the young Red Guards out to tear down those shrines and altars and images and to destroy the places of religious worship in the country.

I got news for you. You may even be able to destroy Buddhism. You may be able to destroy some forms of animism, but you cannot destroy what God has built.

But he sure tried. And to the degree, to the degree that Mao Zedong was successful in destroying the stranglehold, which those religions had on the minds and hearts of the Chinese people, to that degree, it makes it that much easier to preach the gospel in the nation of China. There was the cultural revolution, a 10-year span of time, which ended in 69, which was the most disastrous period in modern China's history.

It was called a cultural revolution because Mao wanted to destroy all of the old culture of China so that he could impose upon China a new communist culture. One of the things he tried to do was to destroy the family in China. The family, the Chinese family and the Jewish family, are the two strongest family units in

the world.

And he tried to destroy the Chinese family unit. Why? Because you can't be loyal to mom and dad and grandpa and grandma and be loyal to me. So he had to try and destroy the Chinese family.

I'm here to tell you that he didn't succeed. But he did break the stranglehold which the older generation had upon the young people so that the young people were now able and are now able to do some thinking and deciding for themselves. That was a divine provision, too, because that was one of the great obstacles to the spread of the gospel in China.

If mom and dad said no, there was no question about it. And the Chinese family is a big family. I mean, there are usually about 4,000 people in the Chinese family.

It's an extended family. They know all their uncles and aunts by name. For generations, they know them all, first name, second name, number one uncle, number two uncle, number three uncle, number five uncle, uncle six, six aunts, seven aunts.

They know them all. But that stranglehold was broken by Mao Zedong, which made it easier for the young people to accept either communism or an alternative to communism. There was the problem of illiteracy.

Mao Zedong was a partly educated man, a self-educated man. He wound up as a librarian in a university, but really had no university degree. He had read a lot, mostly the writings of Marx and Lenin and so on, which led him into communism.

But he began to write profusely because he could not speak to the Chinese people by radio because his dialect wasn't understood by the most of the Chinese people, and he himself spoke Mandarin with such a terribly broad accent that it was hopeless. And so he communicated by the pen and became, number one, the most read writer of our generation. Number two, he became, in the Chinese thinking, one of the great calligraphers, Chinese character writers in history.

Mao Zedong wrote all of these wonderful things about the future of China and about interpreting Marxism as he thought and what was going to happen to China and what needed to be done in China. He wrote all of these things, gave them to the fellows and said, go on out, spread it all over China. And they came back and said, sir, it's hopeless.

Only 20 percent of the people can read what you've written. The presses of China had turned out more of Mao's writings at that period of time than the Bible. It was the only time in modern history that the Bible had been superseded by any other publication, the writings of Mao.

Mao said, you mean they can't read it? No. He said, well, change that. And he began a massive literacy program to change the Chinese language or rather to teach everybody in China to read and write.

And they made dramatic progress for a number of years. It was forced. The farming people didn't want to read and write.

After all, you don't have to learn to read and write to farm. We've been doing it for generations. We've got to be able to read the sun and the moon and stars.

And you've got to know something that grandpa and grandma passed on to you and mom and dad, but you don't have to learn to read and write. They weren't interested. And 80 percent of the people of China

are farmers.

And it was difficult to force them to learn to read and write. But they made dramatic progress over a number of years. As I say, once again, under a dictatorship, certain things are possible, whether under a democracy would be much more difficult.

But then they came to a plateau and were not able to make any further progress. Mao Zedong said, what's the matter with you fellows? How come you're not getting the job done? They said, we don't know. We did fine for a few years, but the percentage is not increasing any.

So Mao sent his men out to find out why. They decided that the problem was that the Chinese written language, the characters were too difficult for the average person to learn to read and write. Not because they were less intelligent, because they were so busy and they were many of them and it was difficult for them to read and write.

So Mao said, let's make it simpler so that everybody can learn to read and write. Now that had been suggested before several times in Chinese history. When I was a boy in China, a scholar had to memorize 40,000 Chinese characters.

Now, every character is a feat of memorization. There is no alphabet. You don't put them together.

Every character is a feat of memorization. 40,000. That had been reduced to about 20,000.

I have a Chinese typewriter in my office in Hong Kong. Do you know how many keys my Chinese typewriter has? 6,000 keys. Anybody want to be my secretary? The Chinese language was just so complicated.

The written language was the most complicated of any written language on earth. Mao said, we'll simplify it. Now that had been suggested before, but always the intellectuals would rear up and say, no.

It was good enough for our fathers and it's good enough for us. You're not going to simplify. Of course, they didn't want to simplify.

They didn't want the everybody to read and write, because that would mean they would no longer have the economic and political hold on the country. Mao said, we're going to teach everybody to read and write. We're going to simplify.

The intellectuals said, no. And Mao put the intellectuals in jail and they went ahead and simplified it. Much simpler under a dictatorship.

So with the intellectuals out of the way, they proceeded to simplify it. Now, I can't explain exactly how it was done for three reasons. Number one, we don't have time.

Number two, I don't really know myself. And number three, you're not that interested. But let me give you a little illustration.

Let's imagine that there is a Chinese character that looks like a letter H, right? There is no such thing. We're just imagining. Now, all Chinese characters are developed on the basis of strokes.

One stroke, two strokes, three strokes. You see, how do you develop a dictionary when there is no alphabet? They told me when I went to Hong Kong that there was no Chinese telephone book because you might dial the wrong number. Now, that's not true.

What you do is you look at that particular character, which makes up the surname, and you count the number of strokes in that character, right? And then you look in the book under that number. And if you're lucky, you find the character. Got it? Well, the letter H. One, two, three.

Simple character. Now, in order to simplify that character, we reduce the number of strokes to two instead of three. Now, some Chinese characters have up to 47 different strokes in them.

47 of them. And you've got to memorize them all in one character. So Mao said, we'll simplify it.

Let's reduce the number of characters from three to two. So you put a character on the blackboard that looks like this. One stroke this way, one stroke that way.

Just remove one stroke. Call the professor from the University of California in and say, sir, what is that? He'd say, I don't know. Call any Chinese scholar in.

What is that? Boom, boom. Doesn't make any sense at all. By merely removing one stroke, you have created a totally new written form of the language.

The older generation can't read it. And the younger generation are educated only with that simplified form and would find it difficult, if not impossible, to read the old form of the language. Now, that accomplished two things for Mao.

First of all, it enabled him to, so that more of the people in China could read his writing. And secondly, it gave him a captive audience. And all of the books that had been written in the Chinese language previous to that period of time were inaccessible and understandable to a whole generation of young people.

He had a captive audience. In addition to that, they reduced the number of characters until in China today, you can read a daily newspaper with between five and 6,000 characters. Why did he do it? He did it to make it easier for people to read his writings and be converted to the ideology of Marxist, Leninist, Mao Zedong thought.

He succeeded. He succeeded in improving the transportation system. He succeeded in destroying the stranglehold of the religions of China.

He succeeded in reducing the stranglehold of the cultural aspects of Chinese society. He succeeded in simplifying the written language of China. He succeeded in teaching one common language to all the people of China.

And then he died because God was through with him. Mao, or the Chinese church, had been established by Western missionaries in a country whose history was thousands of years older than ours, whose culture was far deeper and broader than our culture is. Ours is an infant culture.

Theirs is an ancient culture. Western missionary came to China at precisely the same time that colonialism was spreading all over the world. The Portuguese, the French, the Dutch, the British, the Americans, the Germans, the Italians, their colonial talons were reaching out all over the world, and not the least into the nation of China.

Until as a result, partly of that colonialist influence, China was reduced to one of the poorest countries in the world, and at once had been one of the most progressive countries. And missionary had arrived in China at the same period of time, and therefore was identified in the minds of the people with this colonialist influence. A nation where it was important for the church to be a native church became a dependent church, depending on the missionaries for money, depending on the missionaries for leadership, depending on the missionaries for doctrine, depending on the leadership for the cultural adaptations of Christianity.

And God saw that that would never do, that there would never be a strong church in China as long as that was there. And the church in China was weak and dependent, for the most part. And so God said, we got to do something about that.

And that's when Mao came to power. And the church in China began to suffer, we felt, under the hand of the communists, and indeed they did suffer. Persecution, as has seldom been experienced by any church in history.

Mao Zedong said, we're going to destroy all the religions of China, but particularly Christianity. It is the greatest threat to our way of life and to our belief. How are we going to destroy Christianity in China? I know, he said, we'll get rid of all the missionaries, and that will destroy the church because the church is dependent upon the missionaries.

So it was that one of the first things he did was made it impossible for the missionaries to stay in the country. And Mao thought, that'll destroy the church. And so did many of the Christians.

They wept and wailed and said, Lord, what are we going to do without the missionaries? As they wept and wailed and sought the face of God, God spoke to them one by one and said, I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. I will supply all your needs according to my riches and glory by Christ Jesus.

And the church that had been dependent upon the missionaries learned the hard way how to depend on God, which is what God wanted all along. Right? Let me tell you something. Anything that makes you pray more is good for you, no matter how bad it is.

Do I hear any amen? True anyhow. And when the missionaries left, it sure made the church in China pray more. What are we going to do? And it was when they prayed that they heard the voice of God and realized that God could raise up among them spiritual leaders who could take them in the direction that God wanted them to go.

And the church did not die. Mao looked around, he said, boy, that didn't work. Let's try something else.

Missionaries are gone and still the church survives. What do we do? And I know what we'll do. We'll close all the church but first he said, let's send all the pastors off to prison camps and labor camps.

And so every pastor in China was arrested and sent away to labor camp, to prison, martyred, gotten out of the picture somehow. And the church in China was left without spiritual leaders, without pastors. What does the church do without pastors? The church wailed again and said, God, what are we going to do? We have no pastors, no shepherd, no one to lead us.

These men, most of whom had been trained by the missionaries, were now out of the picture completely. Two things were happening. God began to raise up in the congregation laymen and laywomen and put the

stamp of his approval and the seal of his Holy Spirit upon them and they became the spiritual leaders of the congregation, all of whom were looking to God instead of looking to man, because man wasn't around.

Secondly, the pastors and laymen that went off to prison learned one thing, that even in a prison cell and solitary confinement for seven or eight years, God doesn't leave you, he's there with you all the time. There wasn't anybody else to talk to, so they began to commune with God. I've talked to some of those dear pastors who are out of prison now, who spent 15, 18 years in prison with nobody but God to talk to.

Brother, if you lived in that kind of a relationship with God, you've got something that I don't have. Mao Zedong said, the pastors are all in prison and the church hasn't died. Next thing we'll do is close all the church buildings, and he did close every single church building in China.

Forbid the Christians to worship in any church that had been constructed with your missionary dollars in mind. Everyone was closed. Factories, schools, Communist Party headquarters were now in the church building.

During the Cultural Revolution out of hatred, the young Red Guards climbed on the top of every church in China and tore the cross from the roof. When I first went back to China, there wasn't a cross to be seen anywhere in the nation of China. Now the Christians were without a church.

How are we going to worship if we don't have a church? How are we going to worship if we don't have a church? But you see what Mao Zedong didn't know was that the church isn't the church. It's only a building in which the church meets. And so when there was no church buildings, the church said, where can we meet? They're longing for fellowship, longing for food.

Where do we meet? And they said, let's meet in the home. And eventually, you see, God got the church in China back where he wanted it, among the homes of the people, where the first church originally began, and where in the Chinese culture it has to be in order to survive. Mao Zedong looked for a while, and he said, boy, that isn't helping any.

Instead of one church in town, there's a hundred of them, because everywhere there's a Christian family, there's a church. What are we going to do? How are we going to destroy the Christians? I know what we'll do. We'll take all their Bibles away from them.

After all, if the Bibles don't have, if the Christians don't have their Bibles, the church will die, right? Wrong. You see, several things happened. One, some people marvelously and miraculously preserved their Bibles, not very many, but one lady baked her Bible inside of a loaf of bread, and when the Red Guards came to find her Bible, she didn't serve them bread and jam, you know.

Another one hid her Bible behind the bricks in the fireplace. I was sitting in church in Shanghai a short time ago, and sitting next to me in this church was a middle-aged lady, and she had a big old yellow Bible. And I said, where did you get that Bible? She looked at me, and she said, oh, it was my mother's Bible.

But I said, didn't the Red Guards get it? No, she said, look, all around the edges of the Bible, you see where the rats have eaten the leather? She said, my mother hid her Bible up under the eaves of the house, and the Red Guards never found it. This is my mother's Bible. She's gone to be with the Lord, but I still have my mother's Bible.

So miraculously, Bibles were preserved. In addition to that, the Chinese educational system, as you know, is a rote memorization system. From Confucius' day on, the Chinese have had to memorize everything.

Everything. They have the ability to memorize better than any other people that I know in the world. And they memorized the scriptures.

Many of them were illiterate, but they could recite whole chapters of the Bible. And that's something Mao Zedong couldn't take away from them. I was preaching in Sweden some years ago, and a 93-year-old ex-China missionary came up to me and says, Brother Kaufman, let me tell you the story.

She said, in my part of China, the most outstanding evangelist, a Chinese in our part of the country, came to me one day and he said, Sister, God has told me to stop preaching. Now, I thought he'd got into some weird cult of some kind. I said, but you can't stop preaching.

You're the best preacher we've got. He said, yes, God's told me to stop preaching. God's told me that in a few years, we're going to have all of our Bibles taken away from me, from us in this country.

The Communists have not yet come to power. We're going to have all of our Bibles taken away, and God has told me that I'm to commit the next few years of my life to memorizing the entire Bible. This dear old Swedish missionary said in four years he learned the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

I've since met three others who had a similar experience, to which the Holy Spirit spoke before the Communists came to power and said, you memorize the Bible. In the prison camps, the internment camps, the labor camps, in one particular camp there were a number of pastors, Roman Catholic, Protestants alike, and in that kind of a situation, all barriers are broken, and they became one in Jesus Christ. And they became hungry for the Word.

Of course, it was denied them. Finally, in moments when they would pass each other, they'd say, where are we going to get a Bible? Finally, someone said, let's recreate the Bible from memory. Let's appoint Mr. So-and-so as the secretary, and you write down all of the verses of the Bible that you can remember, and pass them on to him, and let's see if we can create the Word of God.

I wonder how big the Bible would be if we tried that here. How far would we get in putting together even the New Testament? And who is to say that that might not happen in our country? Hide God's Word in your hearts, and it can never, never be taken away. So poor old Mal, that didn't work either.

Everything that Mal tried to do to destroy the Christian church, God used that specific thing to strengthen the Christian church. Very frustrating. Almost feel sorry for Mal.

He tried so hard, and everything backfired. You see, isn't it true that when a thing becomes rare, it becomes more valuable? When you've got lots of them, so who cares? But if there's only a few around, everybody wants one. And when the Bible in China became rare, it became more valuable than it had ever been before.

People were saying, where can I get a Bible? Where can I get a Bible? And the news would spread, Mrs. Wong's got a Bible. And late in the night, when the communists were in bed, they'd make their way out to Mrs. Wong's house and knock on the door. They had a candle, piece of paper, and a pencil, and they'd say, Mrs. Wong, can we copy some chapters from your Bible? All night long, by candlelight, they'd copy from her Bible, and before dawn, they'd stick the piece of paper in their gown and rush home saying,

hallelujah, I've got God's word.

I've got God's word. Let me tell you something, when you write the Bible out by longhand, it gets into your heart like it never does when the preacher preaches it. Poor old Mao.

Everything he tried backfired. Isn't that what the Bible says? The Bible says, all things work together for good to them that love the Lord and are called according to his purpose. Why? Now, you and I know that everything is not good, but God's able to make that which isn't good into that which is good.

Amen? In fact, you don't know whether it's good or not. You may think you do. The Chinese have got a proverb for anything, and this is one of their proverbs.

They say that there was a very poor Chinese family, a very poor Chinese family, and they would be poor for centuries, generation after generation, no hope of ever advancing. One day there was a knock on the door and a man said, I understand you have a son. They said, yes.

Well, I have an extra horse. I'd like to give it to your son. Well, that's like somebody driving up and saying, I got an extra Mercedes-Benz I'd like to give to your son.

Impossible. Never could they have had a horse. They said, you really mean that? Said, yes, I just happened to have an extra one.

I'd like to give it to your son. Oh, that would be wonderful. That night the family went to bed and they said, what good luck.

Our son. But the son couldn't wait for the dawn to break. Out of the door and out of the window he went.

Out to the paddock that they had created the night before and decided to go for a ride on his new horse. He jumped on the horse. The horse didn't like it, kicked him off.

He broke his leg. That night the family gathered round and they said, what bad luck. Our son has a horse and he has a broken leg.

A few days later there was a knock on the door and a bandit chieftain come down out of the hills looking for recruits for his bandit army. I understand you have a son. Yes.

Well, I have come to demand that he join my army. Sorry, sir. Our son has a broken leg.

I can't use anybody with a broken leg. Slammed the door and rode off. That night the family gathered round and they said, what good luck.

Our son has a broken leg. In other words, we really don't know what's good and what isn't good. Is that right? No.

But God's able to make all things work together for good if you love the Lord and are the called according to his purpose. And all of the years of communist oppression in the nation of China created a situation in which to which God can move. He prepared the church.

He prepared the country of China. He had used Mao Zedong to do what the missionaries could never do. We could never convince the people that humanism was not the answer, that materialism was not the answer, that communism was not the answer.

We could never convince the Chinese people of these things. But Mao Zedong sure did. He sure did.

Now, my friend in China, there are very, very few people that believe in communism. Now, if your God is dead and their God was Mao Zedong and your Bible is gone, the little red book, and the government is saying what a terrible man Mao Zedong was and what great mistakes he made. And when I was in China a few weeks ago, they padlocked the mausoleum where his body lay in state and is never going to open again to show the body of Mao Zedong.

And they're digging his grave about a foot deeper ideologically every week. They're trying to get China to forget this man and his policies and change the nation in another direction. And everybody in China knows that Mao died a failure and communism doesn't work.

Now, if you lose your faith, it's a shattering experience. And a man has to believe in something, and so very soon he begins to search for something in which to believe. At this period of time, Deng Xiaoping came to power.

He said, we've got to modernize China, open the doors of China, let the tourists in, let the Western world with its tremendous ability and scientific things show us how to do this and do that. And in order to produce, and in order to develop the modern country that we want, we've got to give the people a little more freedom and liberty. And so China began to liberalize.

And the church began to come out from its hiding places, driven there during the darkest days of the Cultural Revolution. Soon two families and three families were meeting together, and four families and five. And soon we were hearing of 5,000 Christians gathered in the mountains at a time, 10,000 gathered in a time.

We're beginning to hear of water baptismal services of 200, 300, 500, up to 2,000 Christians at a time being baptized. That had never happened during the missionary era. We began to count up what God was doing in Kunan province, Qinan province, Fujian province, Shandong province, and Guangxi province, and began to see what God was doing from one end of China to the other.

And the church began to grow. In 1969, we're estimated that there were only a half a million Christians left in all of China. Half of the number that were there when the Communists took over.

So great had been the persecution and the attrition by death. But then things began to happen. And once again, we were counting a million Christians in China, and 2 million, and 4 million.

And Dennis Bloodworth, a journalist from Singapore, went to China, traveled across the country, and came back and said, there are 8 million Christians in China. And the world said, can it be possible? There are 8 million Christians? And before you could ask the question, there were 10 million. And then there were 20 million.

Then there were 30 million. And the church was growing in China more rapidly than it had ever grown in any period in history. You say, why? How? God had prepared the people, God had prepared the facilities, and God had prepared the church.

And now, God began to pour out of his spirit upon all flesh. And remember, there's more flesh in China than any other country in the world. And God began to pour out his spirit in China.

And the Holy Spirit's outpouring is to draw all men. You see, nobody comes to Christ apart from the Holy Spirit, right? He convicts of sin, righteousness, and the judgment that comes. And he began to convict men and women of sin.

And a whole generation of young people, disillusioned with Communism, with the greatest spiritual vacuum that had ever been created in history, began to rush in their search for truth and reality. Where did they find it? They found it in the lives of these Christians who came out of the prison camps with the joy of the Lord on their faces. They didn't come out with hatred and bitterness.

They came out with joy because they'd spent those years walking with God. I've met some of them. They're magnificent Christians.

Twenty years of talking with God will produce some kind of a person. These are the key people that came out, simple but profound in their faith in God. Their lives became a witness and a testimony.

And the younger generation began to look at these older people and say, what makes you so happy? How does it come that you can walk out of prison without hating the Communists? They would say to them, like they've said to me, oh, we thank God for the Communists, because the Communists have taught us how to fellowship with God as we never have before. We're closer to God now than we've ever been before. What makes you so happy? You really want to know? Yeah, I want to know.

What makes you so happy? Sit down, I'll tell you. And one by one, these young people came to Jesus Christ. And then miracles began to happen all over the church in China.

As far back as I can remember, it's been very common in the Chinese church to cast out evil spirits, because we deal with evil spirits constantly. And under Communism, that was an even greater situation than had been in the days of animism, because that's a demonic force. And so one of the first things the church had to do was deal with demonic power in the lives of these young people that had been red guards and had been sold out to the ideology.

And hopeless cases were brought to them and in simple faith, simple people, without any education, without any ministerial training, without any seminaries. No one had been trained in the ministry in China for 30 years. They began to read the Bible and read where these signs shall follow them that believe.

And they began to cast out demons in Jesus' name, and those delivered by demonic power became the greatest witnesses of the grace of God. They began to bring the sick to the church in China. You believe in a great God, you believe in an almighty God, then pray for this person that's dying of cancer.

One by one, God began to heal all over China. The sick were healed by the mighty power of God. Some of them were Communist leaders, like the security chief in one particular village.

He went to arrest a group of Christians that were holding a service in a house church, and he stayed outside under the window to get all that he could of the message so that he could have evidence against them. The only problem was that it was an evangelistic message and he got convicted of his sin. And he called off the raid that night and said to the fellows, we'll come back another night.

Several days later he became violently ill. They rushed him to the hospital. They said, you have last stages of cancer of the throat.

You don't have long to live, there's nothing we can do for you. He agonized over this for a period of time, and then he said, those people out there pray for the sick. In the middle of the night he went out there and prayed, had the laymen out there pray for him.

God healed his cancer. He became an evangelist. A woman was dying.

She'd worked in a rock quarry. A rock had fallen down from the mountain and tindered to the ground, broke every bone in her upper body. They rushed her to the hospital, X-rayed her.

The bones were broken. Broken bones had pierced her vital organs. There was no chance of her living.

They wheeled her into the ward to die. That night the doctor passed by her room to see if she was alive and heard her pray, Jesus help me, Jesus help me. He went home shaking his head and said, what hopelessness.

He didn't believe in God. Came back the next morning, the nurses met him and said, Mrs. Wong is sitting up in bed. He went in, she was eating her breakfast.

He said, what are you doing? She said, I'm eating breakfast. He said, no. Rushed her back into the X-ray room and they X-rayed her and there was not one single broken bone in her body.

The doctor that told me that story became a Christian as a result of it. And the woman became an evangelist, very successful too. Traveling all over China with two sets of X-rays before and after.

And so the spirit of God began to move, miracles, the appearance of angels and the church of China exploded. Until today, there are at least 50 million Christians in China. One half a million in 1969, 50 million today.

At least, at least, some estimate it could be twice that number. What I'm here to tell you is that God's on the throne. And when God said that he would pour out his spirit upon all flesh, he meant it.

And there's going to be a great spiritual harvest that will take in the nation of China. This is what God is doing. But in closing, let me just say this, that because of this great revival in China, we have an enormous responsibility.

How do you feed 50 million new believers? How do you shepherd them? Where do you give, how do you get Bibles for them? How do you guide them? What do you do with 50 million newborn babes in Christ? That's our responsibility. It's not enough to shout hallelujah and praise the Lord. We've got to do something about it.

And that's where mission conventions come into the picture. We can get Bibles into China. We can broadcast into China.

We can provide Bible studies to the church in China. We can do many things. And what we can do, we must do.

As an old Chinese pastor said to me, in the missionary era, the shepherds were looking for the sheep. Today, the sheep are looking for sheep. What God is doing places an enormous responsibility on us because we are workers together with God.

So where God is working, we must work, even if the communists don't like it. I challenge you to do more for missions than you've ever done before.

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