

GLT Report

Global Leadership Team meeting recently held in Naning, China. Here's Jim's report:

Pam and I were waiting to check out of our hotel in Nanning, China in August of this year, when we struck up a conversation with a couple who were there to adopt a baby. We found out they were from Hawaii and were committed Christians. During our conversation they mentioned that their Chinese translator had become a Christian only three months earlier through a house church.

I was eager to hear about this directly from this new Christian, so I went over to talk to her. I didn't want to put her security at risk, so I asked her about her experience in a low voice. She had no such qualms. As soon as she understood that I was also a Christian her face lit up and she became very animated.

"I used to be a very anxious and sad person," she said. "But now I am very happy! I was thinking of killing myself. My husband had left me and he took all of my belongings with him. I was very unhappy. But then I became a Christian and now I am very happy. Then I drove my own car, but I was very worried and anxious. Now I ride the bus, but I'm very happy and talk to everyone."

She went on for quite some time with great enthusiasm and with a big smile. She didn't seem to care who might be listening.

Then she said, "Many, many Chinese are becoming Christians. We have found out that this is a big help to us, so many are converting."

I couldn't help but relate her words to what David Aikman had told the GLT earlier in the week. He said that in China today there are Christians throughout the society. They are in the offices, the schools, the businesses, the bureaucracy, and amongst government authorities. No one knows who they are, but they are salted throughout the institutions of China.

China is rapidly becoming a great power, both temporally and spiritually.

The vigorous, enduring nature of this ancient and thriving nation is rapidly becoming a larger and larger part of the spread of the church to all peoples.

I wonder how they will bless us. I wonder how we will be able to bless them. They surely must compose a substantial part of God's plans for our YWAM family.



During our recent GLT meetings in Nanning Loren led off with a study in which he considered three words that we often use in YWAM: autonomy, freedom, and relationship. Two of these words are biblical and one is not.

Freedom in the Spirit and relationships are extremely important in the Bible, and they have been an emphasis in our YWAM family.

Autonomy, however, is not in the Bible even though it is a word that we have used a great deal.

There's another idea that we haven't used much, but that is biblical and modifies our thinking about freedom and relationship. That word is "eldership."

As our meetings progressed we came back again and again to these concepts in the context of several discussions involving widely differing subjects. We began to see that once again Loren had brought us a foundational word from the Lord, to be used in understanding ourselves as a mission. Some preliminary but not definitive directions began to emerge in my thinking, though I can't speak for the whole GLT.

-Freedom in the Spirit and relationship are foundational principles upon which we have built YWAM. They must continue to receive attention and emphasis in the way we relate to one another and work together.

-Autonomy is not a biblical term and it seems that we should take it right out of our vocabulary when we're talking about ourselves.

-Eldership is a very important part of the teaching of the Bible regarding the church and we need to give it more attention than we have up to this point.

-Eldership should never be developed in such a way as to destroy freedom in the Spirit and the dynamic web of relationships that are so foundational to the way we work.

-Eldership must be integrated with freedom in the Spirit and with relational dynamics if it is to serve us in a positive way. We need the energy and creativity of freedom and the unity, wisdom and steadiness of eldership.

-The living Word of the Lord, both rhema and logos, ties relationships, freedom in the Spirit, and eldership together.

-To be a part of YWAM we must serve together under the same eldership. For YWAM international this is the GLT.



-To be a part of an eldership you must be a fully committed part of the eldership group on which you serve.

The whole GLT will be meditating on these concepts over the next year, aiming at more understanding during our next meetings. What do you think?