

Sharing Gospel with the Monk

I. How we met.

It was March 2002. A crowd was streaming in and out of a temple located in a town named Pei-Dou. Some focused on worshipping idles, some cast lots and try their luck, some asked temple workers stem on their 'passport' as a prove of visit, so they can claim it as merit... . A few monks traveled from out of towns, stood on different corners of the temple, each holding a bowl waiting for people to donate. I walked up to one of them, asked a question trying to initiate conversation. He turned his head away not willing to talk to me. After another try without response, I walked away prayed around the temple for the idolatries until the time I was about to leave. The Lord gently spoke to me, 'put \$100 NT in his bowl'. I struggled a little for my religious mind told me how can I give 'offering' to a Buddhist monk. With almost a certainty that it was the Holy Spirit impressed me to give, I took a one hundred NT bill, ask the Lord to bring change through this seed, put it in the bowl of this monk.

Miracle started happening. The monk gave me a big smile, thank me with his 'blessing', we talked for a few minutes, he handed me his name card, invited me to visit him at his temple in Hua-Lien, a city on the other side of the island. I did have to leave for the gathering in that evening, and I didn't think I would travel that far for a temple visit, so I thought that was the end of the story, not knowing that God was at work, on my short prayer 10 minutes ago.

One year later (April, 2003), in the middle of the prayer walk trip, I came to Pei-Dou again. At the same corner of the same temple, he was talking to someone. I walked up stood quietly beside him tried to see if he still recognized me. He didn't hesitate as he saw me, stepped forward holding my hand and said with surprise 'you are here again, I'm so glad to see you.' The man talked to him started asking me questions, I had a chance talk to him about my believe and my God. After he left, Kai-Yen (name of the monk) whisper to me, 'I think yours is better.' I look at his eyes and asked, 'how old are you?' He replied 'I'm 61, and I am not doing well. I have so many physical problems that I'm easily get tired.' I said, 'do you know where you are as far as your work of merit?' He sight with sadness in his eyes, 'it is hard, it is so hard. Your faith in Jesus is so simple.' 'Would you change then.' I replied. 'Only if the fate came to me.' He said. It rooted in his mind that it is not what he wants that can change anything but his fate will somehow decide his destiny. Once again he gave me his name card, with sincerity he said, 'next time when you come to Taiwan, come and visit me. I'll pick you up from the airport, and I have place for you to stay. That way we can talk more.' I knew I'll come when I said yes this time.

II. So here I am,

In his temple that was remodeled from his residence. In our term, Kai-Yen is a free-lancer. He does all the management ministering the temple. People from near and far would come visit him in groups or individuals. They look at him as great teacher, a mentor, a guide in their believe. About two hundred 'disciples' that have relationship

with him and everyone of them initiated the relationships. (Ironic to many disciples of Jesus today?)

In two and half days we have talked, had meal together, he also drove me around to some famous touring places. We both felt like we were good friends. I observed his living, listen to his response to what I shared, asking God for the 'keys' to unlock the doors so I can drive in with right word, right act, right time and so a real impact can happen that can make a turn in him. It's a challenge and a joy to work with the Holy Spirit on this deeply lost soul. I was shocked as my eyes were open to know how much the Lord has loved this man.

Following are the 'keys' that I found in these two days:

- 1) Freedom. The reason why Kai-Yen does not live with other monks in a community temple was because he wants to be 'free'. There are over three hundred laws that are binding his every movement. He simply doesn't want more restrictions from other people surround him pointing their fingers. 'I am binding myself with 'ropes' everyday,' he said, 'I am sinning against the law when I fellowship with you; when I take you out to have leisure time; when I dress without following specific code,...' 'In my daily life, I cannot go outside of my house without a definite reason, therefore, except the three times daily devotions and a very simple meal (one a day), I spend most of my day reading. People will call, or come with their problems and I need to counsel them.' 'I live alone so I can have more freedom.'

More than once Kai-Yen said to me, 'your religion is so simple. You can just go to Jesus and every sin will be forgiven, where we have to bare them by ourselves, you can't imagine how heavy it is.' 'You have a big mountain (Jesus) that you can rely on, but we are all on our own.'

However, in his believing, Kai-Yen does not have the freedom to make his own choice. To him, 'Yuan' (fate) is the one bigger than him and somehow taking control of his life. If 'Yuan' come to him, he will have the luck to make change, if not, he can only 'flow with Yuan (the fate) that is intertwine with his life from 'the life before' as well as 'the life after' this one.

- 2) Power of Death and Hade. 'When I walked in the temples, most of what I saw were things relate to death and hade. Most of those idols were governors of hell? Is it true that majority of your believing are circle around 'hell'?' I asked. He said, 'yes, that's what I've studied the most. I minister to the dead, I teach people about hell (that's most of the scripts are about) and how to work themselves beyond hell and enter paradise. However, you'll never know where you are and how you do in this life.' 'The more I study hell,' he continued, 'the more fear that I am. You can never imagine how horrify the hell is.' He repeated the word 'horrify' couple times as if he was reminding himself about it.

‘I am not afraid of hell, and I don’t care about knowledge of hell’ I said, ‘for as soon as I gave my life to Jesus, I am no longer under the power of death. Hell has no authority over me. Jesus has the authority over my life, and all we know and study are who God is and what belongs to Him in the Heaven, because that’s my inheritance, that’s where I go.’ ‘you can change the destiny by making your choice believing in Jesus, give your life to Him too.’ I continued, ‘because Jesus has done that for you on the cross, you can come under His authority, and He will bring you out of the power of death and hell. Not only so, you can help your 200 disciples get out of hell also.’

I felt in my spirit that this key of death and hell hits home to him. I asked him to pull the car aside and asked if he is willing to pray with me for Jesus to come into his life. He said ‘Hau Ah!!’ (means delightful yes in Chinese) So I asked him to follow my words prayed a decision making confession. I then wrote down the words we prayed, handed it to him. He said, ‘this is not very long, I can memorize it, how many times do I have to pray this prayer every day?’ I explained to him that this is his decision made toward God, and God, according to His promise, will definitely bring him into this new life. So he can pray the prayer until it actually happens.

The next day after I left, I mailed him a New Testament Bible and a ‘Stream in the desert’ for him to read and to meditate on. (that’s what he is good at and he will undoubtedly do)

I remember the last thing I said to him while we were in the Airport parking lot was, ‘It’s not hard for you to be born again into the relationship with Jesus, for Jesus has promised that whoever seek will be found, knock and the door will open for him. The hardest part for you is letting go of all the old religion that you have been committing and even leading people to. You need to ask God to help you and give you the wisdom to face that.’ Guess what did he respond? He said, ‘I can fully understand what you are saying, because I can not set my feet on two boats. (a Chinese cliché)

This is going to be the warfare prayer that I will stand between the gap.