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## A Kernel of Wheat Dies in the Ground



EMERSON & IVY WU



SOUTH AND EAST ASIA

We returned to Hong Kong for another term of ministry in September 2018, and we thank God for allowing us to explore many new things and expanding the ministry.

First, we went to Taiwan twice before and after 2019 New Year. We sponsored the intensive theological training events at Christian Hakka Seminary and also helped the Research Center for Supporting Families of Children with Special Needs at the Chung Yuan Christian University. It was our privilege to help serve the unreached Hakka people by interaction with the students in the seminary and visiting and preaching at the Hakka churches. We also met with the leaders of one college in CYCU to discuss a potential partnership with American Baptist related colleges or universities. Both working with Hakka people (in seminary and churches) and connecting with the CYCU and research center are God-guided breakthroughs in ministry. They are the first ministries that American Baptist Churches and International Ministries have ever done in Taiwan. We are thankful that the Lord Himself initiated His Kingdom work and used International Ministries to begin serving the churches and people in Taiwan.

We also thank God that He opened a door for us to revisit Yunnan, China this year. In China, the majority ethnic minority Lisu people live in Yunnan Province. For those living in Yunnan, there are two big people groups: West Lisu – those who live in the west of the province, and East Lisu who live in north. West Lisu has more population than East Lisu and there are big differences in outfits, dialect, written language, customs and living style.

There are two counties, Yingjiang and Fugong, located in the west of Yunnan province bordering Myanmar's Kachin State to the west. It takes about a day to drive between Fugong county in the north and Yingjiang in the south. Yingjiang county has about 40,000 Christians who are Lisu, Jingpo (Kachin), Dai (Thai) and Han (Chinese). It is one of big Christian populated counties in the province. Besides Yingjiang county, there are about 300,000 West Lisu people living in the Nujiang (Salween river) Valley. Fugong county has about 70,000 Christians and is the most Christian population density (more than 90%) in the province. Through generations, because those Lisu people followed early missionaries' teachings, they have kept their faith and transformed their lives. There are no alcohol or drug addictions in the Fugong county. The local government rated the county as a "drug free county."

Several years ago, we visited Rev. Fraser's tomb at Baoshan city located between Fugong and Yingjiang. "James Outram Fraser (Chinese 詹姆斯·弗拉瑟) (1886–1938) was a British Protestant Christian missionary to China with the China Inland Mission. He pioneered work among the Lisu people of Southwestern China in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He is credited with the Fraser alphabet for their language." ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_O.\\_Fraser](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_O._Fraser)) The tomb stone is carved "*Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. (John 12:24)*" The hundred thousand Lisu Christians today are the result of Rev. Fraser's 30 years mission work. "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" (Isaiah 52:7)"

Although we were exhausted from our trip, (two thirds of our time were on the road,) what we learned about the Lisu people was valuable. We were very excited to visit a hundred-year-old church. The local people told us that church was a very important church around 1920 for 15 years while Rev. Fraser ministered God's work in Yunnan. It served a monthly communion for the vast surrounding areas, and at that time many Christians walked 4 to 5 hours from other mountains to this church to take communion.

In this trip we also saw churches which we called “Contemporary Tabernacles” because they are simple temporary tents on a huge residential complex under construction. Local believers cannot wait to have a physical church in which to worship God instead of their fabric roofed space. Summer is approaching. The temperature will increase to more than 95 Fahrenheit, a very warm condition for them.

Easter is a Spring season to rejoice in the new life God has given through Christ. The Scripture says, “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us (1 John 3:16).” In generation after generation, saints and Christ-followers from early churches until now are beautiful testimonies of a kernel of wheat dying in the ground and producing many seeds. Our dear brothers and sisters, we are grateful to receive Christ’s sacrificial love for forgiving our sins and giving us a life with a new spirit. In His resurrection, we surely have our everlasting joy as long as we walk tightly with Him.

May the miracle of Easter bring you perfect peace.

Please pray for the following:

1. That God would call His servants to join this Global Chinese Mission team
2. That God would call His children to support His mission work
3. That God would lavish His grace on the Lisu people to enable them to build new churches soon
4. That He would give us a heart for His ways and discernment to see His direction
5. That many more financial partners will join our ministry.

PS: Our ministries have magnificently expanded but our PSG (financial support) has significantly decreased since we returned to Hong Kong last September. How long can we stay?

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