



Spiritual Preparation

Coming overseas to live and serve is both an exciting and daunting journey, but it can also be a very spiritually intense time. All of the foreigners at New Day have walked (and are continuing to walk) through this same process. And while each journey is unique, we believe it would be helpful to share some of the areas in which we've been challenged and refined. You may not experience a struggle with any of the points below, but it is important to understand that while you are far from home, God can use this time to shape and refine you in a new way.

As you prepare to serve in China, we highly encourage you to ask God to open your heart to the ways in which He wants to change you through your time overseas. Ask Him to reveal these things to you while you are here. This process can feel quite painful or lonely at times, but it is all a part of God's refining process in our lives. Below are some examples in ways we see God changing our hearts as we seek to serve Him at New Day.

1. **Expectations** – Coming overseas, it is natural to have excitement and vision for the things we believe God has called us to do. We come to China, excited for adventure and all the ways God will use us to bless others. Once we are actually here, we realize that results don't happen as quickly as we would like. We may feel physically sick and cultural differences can be frustrating. All these things can cause us to become disillusioned. In these times, it is important to ask God to show us if we need to change our expectations.
2. **Changing Focus** – It is very easy to focus a lot of our thoughts and preparation on all the things we will *DO* when we serve overseas. We are prepared to work hard and give all we have to the tasks in front of us. We also tend to rate our effectiveness based on how busy we are or how many results we can see. But so much of what God is doing during our time in China is going on deep below the surface – in ways we cannot see immediately. His focus is always on who we are *becoming*, rather than what we are *doing*. When we are tempted to focus too much on our work, we can recognize it and allow God to shape and change our character.
3. **Identity** – Closely related to the point above, it is easy to become discouraged when we feel ineffective. We see how much of our identity and self worth can be tied up in our work. There may be a significant amount of “down time” , you may feel frustrated by your inability to communicate or you may find your days filled with a lot of tasks that seem very normal or boring. In these times, you can

struggle with feelings that you came to China for nothing. Please know that every task you are asked to do, no matter how small, is a part of the overall fabric of the work that God is doing at New Day, and that your selfless willingness to do whatever you are asked is greatly appreciated.

4. **Jealousy** – This can manifest itself in many subtle ways. We can look at the other foreigners working around us in China and be envious of any number of things – the tasks they have been given, the friendships they’re building, the accommodations they are living in, etc.

God’s refining process can touch our hearts in many different and unique ways. As you walk through this process in China, please do not plan to take this journey alone. Below are some ways you can surround yourself with a community of believers and also continually root yourself in the truth of His Word.

1. Have a group of family and friends back home who are committed to praying for you. Email them with stories of your time in China, and give them specific ways they can pray for you and your work. Stay connected with them – and be honest about the highs and lows of your time here. Choose the members of this group carefully, realizing that not everyone will fundamentally share all your values or understand all you may be experiencing in China.
2. Listen to sermons online. If your home church does not have this available, find a pastor or church whose teachings you find meaningful.
3. Bring your Bible and personal study materials with you to China. Work to be faithful in your quiet time and in prayer.
4. Commit yourself to attending church in Beijing on Sundays (if you are here for an extended period) and the participate actively in the daily prayer meetings and Wednesday fellowship at New Day .
5. Connect with other believers at New Day. We understand what you are experiencing and feeling. We can pray for you and understand the specific things God will show you while you’re serving here. Do not let yourself get isolated!

There are many excellent books on spiritual life and some that are particularly relevant to life in China. We highly recommend reading missionary biographies as well as devotional classics. There is simply no way to make an exhaustive list, but we have included some of our favorite titles in the Resources section to help you get started.

Recommended Resources

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- *Repenting of Religion: Turning from Judgment to the Love of God*, by Gregory A. Boyd
- *My Utmost for His Highest*, by Oswald Chambers
- *Organic Church*, by Neil Cole
- *Streams in the Desert*, by L.B. Cowman
- *The Pressure's Off: There's A New Way To Live*, by Larry Crabb
- *Shattered Dreams: God's Unexpected Pathway to Joy*, by Larry Crabb
- *The Sacred Romance: Drawing Closer to the Heart of God*, by Brent Curtis and John Eldredge
- *Waking the Dead: The Glory of a Heart Fully Alive*, by John Eldredge
- *The Shape of Living: Spiritual Directions for Everyday Life*, by David F. Ford
- *The Heavenly Man: The Remarkable True Story of Chinese Christian Brother Yun*, by Brother Yun and Paul Hattaway
- *Closer Than Your Skin: Unwrapping the Mystery of Intimacy with God*, by Susan D. Hill
- *Breaking Free: Discover the Victory of Full Surrender*, by Beth Moore
- *Sit Walk Stand*, by Watchman Nee
- *Don't Waste Your Life*, by John Piper
- *Let The Nations Be Glad*, by John Piper
- *Spiritual Warfare*, by Derek Prince
- *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, by H.W. Smith
- *Improving Your Serve*, by Chuck Swindoll
- *What's So Amazing About Grace?*, by Philip Yancey

Cultural Understanding

China Wakes: The Struggle for the Soul of a Rising Power, by Nicholas Kristof
Up to date account of the issues of life in modern China. Highly recommended by a Chinese friend as being accurate and complete

The New Emperors: China in the Era of Mao and Deng, by Harrison Salisbury
A fascinating account of the history of modern China based largely on interviews and eyewitness accounts. Explains the background of many of the institutions and attitudes of today.

China in Our Time, by Ross Terrill

History of modern China by a veteran journalist and China-watcher.

China, Alive in the Bitter Sea, by Fox Butterfield

A well-written and thorough description of life in China. Not always positive in tone, but realistic in outlook. This is the updated version of one of the first complete looks at daily life in China.

Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China, by Jung Chang

A biography of three generations of Chinese women from the last dynasty, through the Communist Revolution, the Cultural Revolution and into modern China. Widely read and highly recommended as giving an accurate and human picture of what the Chinese people have lived through in this century. Many feel this is among the most moving books on modern China.

Legacies: A Chinese Mosaic, by Betty Bao Lord

Personal observations of how the Chinese people view the turbulent events of the last few decades. The author was born in China and is the wife of the former U.S. ambassador to China, Winston Lord.

Life and Death in Shanghai, by Nien Cheng

A personal account of the author's experiences during the Cultural Revolution, including imprisonment and the aftermath.

Iron and Silk, by Mark Saltzman

The author's personal experiences while studying martial arts and teaching in Changsha, Hunan. Has been made into a motion picture. The author has also written at least one novel set in China.

Riding the Iron Rooster, by Paul Theroux

Vividly written description of China from moving trains, as the author criss-crossed the nation by rail. Excellent descriptions capture much of the essence of modern China.

Son of the Revolution, by Lian Heng & Judith Shapiro

An excellent book for understanding events of the 1960's and 1970's, especially the Cultural Revolution. Gives good insight into what Chinese people have experienced and how it has influenced their thinking. It is the autobiography of a Chinese student who married his American English teacher. Chinese young people who lived through the Cultural Revolution find this book "unremarkable, because his story is so typical," which makes it all the more compelling. The authors have another book that chronicles their return to China in the late 1980's.

Daughter of a Thousand Pieces of Gold, by Peg Helminski

An excellent novel about the experience of orphans in China.

Spiritual Understanding

Note: Many of the books on the church in China are published by specific missions organizations or smaller companies and may be hard to find.

The Resurrection of the Chinese Church, by Tony Lambert, 1994, OMF Books, Harold Shaw Publishers, Box 567, Wheaton, IL 60189

This is the most complete and current book on the church in China. It is not only historical, but describes the political and bureaucratic structures that control religion in China. Scholarly and well-documented.

The China Mission Handbook: A Portrait of China and its Church, by Jonathan Chao, 1989, China Ministries International, Box 40489, Pasadena, CA 91104-7489, ph (818) 398-0145.

This highly readable book is meant to be a resource for China ministry. It contains a brief history and description of the Chinese church, a discussion of the various types of ministry going on in China, and a short description of each province of China.

Wise as Serpents, Harmless as Doves: Christians in China Tell Their Story, by Jonathan Chao & Richard VanHouten, 1988, William Carey Library, Box 40129, Pasadena, CA 91104.

Interviews with Christians in many parts of China, along with supporting background information.

China Miracle, a Silent Explosion, by Arthur Wallis, 1986, Cityhill Publishing.
Insight into how God has been sovereignly working in China using the Communist Party for His purposes, building and purifying the church.

The Church in China: How it Survives and Prospers Under Communism, by Carl Lawrence, 1985, Bethany House.

History of the church – highly recommended.

China, the Emerging Challenge: A Christian Perspective, by Paul Kauffman, 1982, Baker Book House.

An excellent, if dated book written by the founder of Asian Outreach. It includes history, economics, politics and sociology, from a Christian perspective. Also gives the history of the Chinese church and cultural information.

China, the Church's Long March, by David Adeney, Regal/OMF Books

The late David Adeney was one of the foremost authorities on the church in China. Excellent overview.

Films/Videos

In recent years a number of excellent documentaries and films have been released. Here are just a few we recommend:

- China: A Century of Revolution (Three Disc Set) (2007)
- Found in China (2007)
- Nanking (2007)
- Up The Yangtze (2008)
- Wild China (2008) – BBC Documentary
- Young & Restless in China (2008)
- The Last Emperor (1999)
- The Soong Sisters (1997)