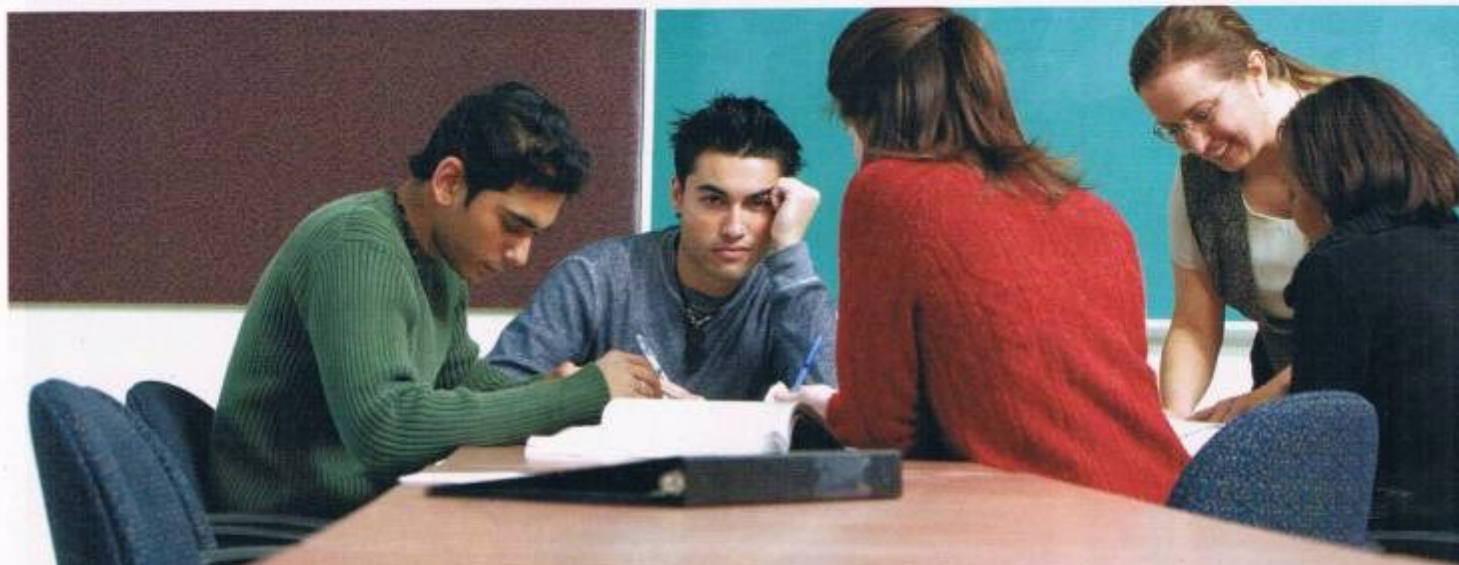


How will we take the gospel to the far-flung world that so desperately needs it? The answer may be closer than many of us realize.



The World at Our Doorstep

BY GREG SWINNEY

I sat expectantly in the worship service as the song leader read loud and clear, “May the nations be glad and sing for joy” (Psalm 67:4). My friend seated next to me must have noticed the puzzled look on my face. “How can the nations be glad, Rich?” I asked. “How can they be glad if we don’t tell them?”

I felt deep regret over my negligence in reaching out to those of other nations. They are searching for truth and grace, but I’ve been preoccupied and distracted.

I have good excuses. At least I thought I did. *Travel is expensive, visas are difficult to obtain, and I don’t know how to speak any foreign languages. How can I reach the nations?*

I know Jesus asked me to “go into all the world,” but how?

Hundreds of thousands of international students are studying in the United States right now. In 1965 there were just over 80,000 international students here, but now we have more than 670,000 (Open Doors, Report on International Educational Exchange, 2009). The current growth rate of 7 to 8 percent has no end in sight.

I live less than a mile from a university with students from nearly 40 different nations. These foreign friends stand among us in line at grocery stores, at college football games, and at local fast-



**EQUIPPING
SERVANTS**

food restaurants.

Sadly, statistics indicate that 70 to 80 percent of all international students will never see the inside of an American home during their stay in the United States. You and I can be a part of helping the nations be glad if we would only open our eyes to those among us.

The good news is we are seeing families, churches, campus ministries, and Bible colleges respond to the need. A family in Kentucky became a "friendship family" for two young Chinese girls. "We met Doris and Stella (Chinese international students) when they attended a kickoff barbecue dinner for international students at the Missouri State University Campus House," says Marina Felder. "We quickly became friends and they attended church with us the two years they were in classes there. Although we later moved several hours away, and they graduated and moved on to other cities for their graduate study, we remain in close contact through e-mail, texting, and phone calls. They have both attended Chinese churches in the cities where they now live!"

I'll never forget Christmas 1995. Peter, a student from Ghana, was studying at the university, and we invited him to join our family for the holiday. We drove to the campus to get him, since he had no car (as is often the case with foreign students). He was quiet during the ride and sat quietly on our living room couch.

"How have you been, Peter?" I asked.

"Not very well, Greg," he responded. "My father died of a heart attack three days ago and I don't have any money to go home for the funeral."

My heart broke. "Peter, we want to be your family as much as possible now. Our house is your house. We'll do anything to help you."

He became part of our family. Then just a few months later, Peter embraced Jesus like never before and began to grow in his faith. After he graduated with a degree in computer systems, Peter worked for Nebraska Christian College. When the college relocated to its new Omaha campus, Peter designed the computer network systems and developed the Web site for the new campus. Today Peter is home in Ghana with his family, starting a

Begin to pray for the international students near you and invite your church missions team to join you.

small business, and reaching out to those around him.

A Revolution Is Beginning

Leaders are gathering to pray and seek the Lord for a vision to reach the world with creative strategies and fresh ideas. Restoration Revolution leaders have set goals for the next 10 years. According to www.restorationrevolution.com: "We are seeking 100 churches that will adopt one state university to reach out to the 670,000

foreign students who will return to their homeland upon completion of their studies. It is our hope and prayer that over a 10-year window, 100 churches could identify, disciple, and employ 100 young leaders each, for a total of 10,000 workers who will return indigenous missionaries to their own people."

This is a tremendous goal and at first seems like "mission: impossible." Still, this journey begins like any other . . . with one small step. You and I can befriend an international student. We can go into all the world and change it one person at a time by living lives of radical hospitality. Begin to pray for the international students near you and invite your church missions team to join you.

Maybe you have a son or daughter in college. Encourage your child to invite that international student who lives down

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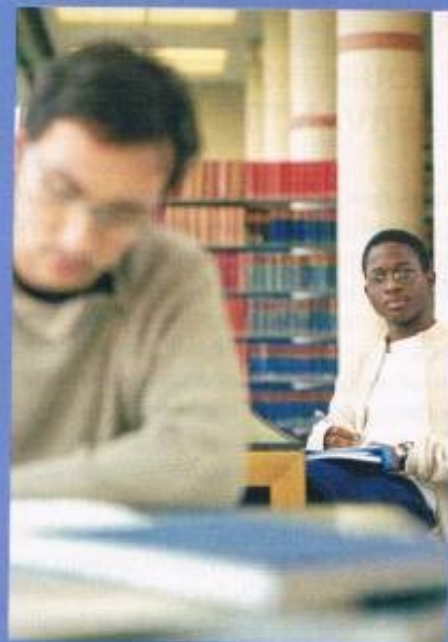
The 10/40 Window Is Open to You

Mission agencies continue to direct our focus at sharing the gospel in the 10/40 window. This geographical region sandwiched between 10 degrees north latitude and 40 degrees north latitude stretches from Africa to the Philippines and represents the majority of the unreached people groups of the world.

More than 65 percent of international students come from nations within the 10/40 window. Prayers for unreached people groups are being answered. The 10/40 window is no longer 8,000 miles away; in some cases it is minutes from your home.

Though you may not be able to speak a foreign language, get an international visa, or pay for a plane ticket, you can help reach the world in Jesus' name. Begin the journey by simply becoming a friend.

International students are immersed in a new culture and are far away from family, friends, and everything that was once familiar to them. These students feel out of place, lost, and alone. On top of that, most are still learning to speak English.



Surrounded by Americans who talk fast, walk fast, and seem to have little patience, these international guests wander in silent desperation. They just want a friend.

—G.S.

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the hall in the dormitory home for Christmas. You'll be amazed at how appreciative they are. Jesus said, "I was a stranger and you invited me in . . . whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me (Matthew 25:35, 40). Answer his call.

Join a National Movement

Godly Christian leaders from across the nation have prayed and sought the Lord to strategically establish a new ministry to reach out to international students and equip them for ministry upon returning home.

Crossroads International Student Ministries officially launched on 10-10-10

(October 10, 2010). The newly formed ministry works to awaken Christian families and leaders to the growing numbers of international students at American universities and the opportunity to reach them with the good news of the gospel. Crossroads International is developing strategies to recruit workers from churches, campus ministries, and Christian colleges to minister to foreign students.

As the ministry networks with other mission organizations, it will train and equip workers using every means possible. Quality resource materials will be available to assist in outreach to international students and to introduce them to Jesus in respectful and sensitive ways through genu-

ine friendship, Bible studies, discussion of life issues, special events, and conferences. Our dream is to equip these international students to start or strengthen churches after returning to their home country.

If just 1 percent of all who say they know Jesus as Lord would reach out to an international student, there would be a friend or family for every one of these foreign guests in the United States. Can you imagine how different the world could become?

Greg Swinney serves as the ministry facilitator with Crossroads International Student Ministries. Prior to this calling he served as a campus minister in Nebraska for 26 years. For more information about Crossroads International, write info@crossroadsinternational.net or Crossroads International, P.O. Box 305, Kearney, NE 68848.