

Food For Thought
by George Davis

In 1949 the communist revolution marked the end of all missionary efforts in China. All foreign missionaries were expelled. After the communist takeover the Chinese government bitterly attacked the Church in China, driving it underground.

For 25 years China was closed to any outside "Christian" influences. Little information filtered through the tight-knit bamboo curtain. All remaining Christian leaders were rounded up wholesale and were either imprisoned or killed outright. Everything that was considered "Christian" was destroyed, church building, bibles, hymnals, everything. For 25 years a holocaust far exceeding that, inflicted on the Jews by Nazi Germany, ensued. It is estimated that about 27 million died during this purging.

In 1978 Deng Xiaoping came into power and China opened her borders once again. The western world stood in breathless anticipation. What would they find in the aftermath of such a horrible slaughter? Missionaries from around the world stood ready, poised in anxious intrepidity. Would there even be one surviving believer? Nothing could have possibly prepared them for what they were about to see!

After 25 years of horrendous persecution the missionaries returned to find that the church in China had not been obliterated, as many had feared, but that they had grown in number from the estimated one million believers before the 1949 revolution, to about 30 million. The contrast was amazing! What had caused such unprecedented growth? How could this be? Not only had they grown numerically but they had grown spiritually. The tales of their devotion to Christ are nothing short of inspirational. Most bewildering is the fact that this unparalleled growth occurred without the aid of any of those things that are thought to be essential in denominational churches today. Without the aid of professional pastors/priests, church buildings, bibles, Sunday-school materials, homilies, hymnals and mass gatherings, the Church in China has grown numerically and spiritually to be the most victorious expression of Christ's Church on the earth today. By all accounts, nothing like it has existed since the early Church. The very gates of hell could not prevail against her!

Makes you think doesn't it?