

For release 10 November 2011

Chinese “Big Brother” Finds Huge Audience - in Churches

Today he is known as “Rev. Duan” but to his Chinese acquaintances and business clients they knew him simply as “Big Brother”. All of his life Duan had been interested in spiritual things and had even studied at a Buddhist monastery learning the “Five Precepts” from one of the renowned “masters”. His belief covered both Buddhism and Taoism, filling his home with the idols from both religions. Years later, starting his business in the capital of China, Duan had been one of the first entrepreneurs to emerge from a growing group of business savvy pioneers. However, he soon left his successful restaurant businesses in Beijing for greener pastures in Budapest, Hungary. Unwisely on his departure he gave his money to a friend to change. When the friend returned there was nothing left - he had been swindled. After a time with meagre beginnings he started a clothing business in Budapest as well as a Chinese restaurant and a number of other successful companies. Owning over 10 shops there he was soon noticed by both other business people and by the underworld. Being one of the only Chinese family units in a large ex-pat community their home was always the centre of good Chinese food, love and care for those who had left family and friends for what they saw as a better life. It wasn't long before Duan and his wife Lin were chosen to be leaders of the Budapest Chinese community. Their influence was so widespread that they were soon even producing a newspaper called “The European Voice”. In the midst of all of this success the businessman heard, for the first time, a young American Pastor preaching the Gospel. A short time later he also met an elderly English woman who shared the simple plan of salvation through Jesus Christ in Chinese to a spiritually hungry Duan. Impressed by her boldness and by her fluency at being able to speak twelve different languages she found an attentive and impressed audience in the entrepreneur. The “sophisticated” businessman became childlike and prayed the sinner's prayer with the woman. Being such an example in the Chinese community had repercussions. The first was that many began to put their trust in Jesus Christ. There was an attitude that “if it is good enough for “Big Brother” it is good enough for me.” Secondly, with a new way of life business also had to change. Rather than some of the time being a man of integrity and some of the time having business dealings with people of “an illegal background”, the latter was soon dropped out of his life. It was not without its price. One evening he was lured at midnight to a Chinese restaurant by a member of the Chinese Mafia in Budapest. It was here that he was kidnapped by a gang, stabbed thirteen times and left for dead. His scars are witness to the wounds which included one thrown at and stuck into his back. The next thing he remembers is being “on the ceiling” of an operating room witnessing his dead body. It was this out of body experience that finally convinced his wife that God was real and that this new path was one to be followed. Today Duan and his wife travel across China sharing his message of God's abundant grace and how he was changed “From Thief to Evangelist”. His audience is both small and large churches from every kind of background.

Rev. Duan's full and compelling testimony was recently filmed in China by OLI Productions, the media arm of Harvest Fields Commissioning International, a U. K. Based leadership training and TV and film production charity. It will appear in the film and TV programme “BEIJING: City of 10,000 Stories” highlighting the fascinating stories of Believers in this vast nation. Other series produced by the organisation include “Principles of Leadership” - 52 of the most respected and loved Christian leaders in the world today, “Principles of Praise” with well known and key singers and songwriters as Israel Houghton and Tim Hughes and “Stars in His Crown” (Christian actors, actresses, producers, directors from the world of TV, film and the stage). Airing on over 40 Christian and independent TV networks worldwide they have also been producing a number of programmes aimed at the secular market that include both Christian and non-Christian guests with inspirational backgrounds and stories of their life and work.

HFC International has a mission to assist in raising up and encouraging leaders in over 47 countries and on all 5 continents for work in churches, charities, NGOs and other humanitarian assistance groups. Its website is at: www.principles.tv.