

Recalling a Gospel Conversation During Easter

Sister J



Easter arrived, and the church planned to organize brothers and sisters to spend a special weekend at a farmhouse courtyard near the mountains. On one hand, it was to commemorate the Lord's death and resurrection; on the other hand, it was to give brothers and sisters more time to fellowship and build relationships with one another. Originally, this event was not intended to invite unbelieving family members or seekers; it was prepared simply as a church retreat. However, on the day before departure, a sister's unbelieving colleague (Xiulan) insisted on joining us. Xiulan had never attended church before, nor had she participated in any church activities. But after we explained that it was a church event, she still firmly wanted to come along. We knew then that this was someone God had sent, and we could not refuse. I deliberately arranged for her to share a room with me so I could have more opportunities to share the gospel with her.

Xiulan only knew the sister-couple who invited her; she didn't know anyone else in the group. The ice-breaking began during dinner when everyone barbecued together. The warm and lively atmosphere seemed to infect her—she showed no trace of awkwardness or unfamiliarity. I took the opportunity to sit beside her and asked if she had retired and was now helping her son take care of his child in the city. She said yes. Here is an excerpt of our conversation:

Me: How old is the child? Is he naughty? Is it tiring to look after him every day?

Xiulan: Not tiring. The child is two years old and can walk now (she showed me photos of her grandson).

Me: Your grandson is so chubby and cute! How are your son and daughter-in-law?

Xiulan: They're doing quite well. Their jobs are stable, and they've bought a house in the city. They treat me very kindly. This weekend they encouraged me to come out and relax.

Me: You're really blessed. (It seemed she hadn't come because of any family conflict.) Have you ever been exposed to faith before? You know we are believers in Jesus.

Xiulan: Everyone else in my family believes in Buddhism.

Me: What about you? (She smiled gently.) Ordinary people often say that all religions teach people to do good. (She nodded.) Actually, we view Buddhism more as a philosophy than a faith. Do you know the story of the Buddha?

Xiulan: No.

Me: Buddha Shakyamuni was a prince in Nepal. Seeing the suffering of birth, old age, sickness, and death in the world, he left home to seek enlightenment and a way to end suffering. But during his ascetic practices, he did not attain enlightenment. Later, he sat under a bodhi tree in deep meditation. Finally, he realized: "All is emptiness" is the solution. That is, if we regard everything as empty and do not see suffering as real, then there is no pain. But suffering still exists—it doesn't disappear, right? (She nodded.) Later, people developed his teachings into Buddhism. Today's Buddhism emphasizes merit: the more money you donate, the greater the blessings you receive. Don't you think it has changed somewhat? The monks in temples are basically trading with people. Isn't the Buddha they believe in too small? (She nodded.) Actually, Shakyamuni himself died—otherwise, where do those relics and bones in the temples come from? Do you believe in ghosts?

Xiulan: In the countryside, there are stories of haunted places.

Me: If there are ghosts, then there are also gods. Our ancestors said: "Three feet above your head there are divine beings." We Christians believe this world was created by God, and God is the Most High. Have you heard of the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve?

Xiulan: No.

Me: Noah's Ark? Abraham? Jesus? Never heard of them?

Xiulan: No.

Me: (This is a very pure and simple heart.)

So I began to tell her about God's creation, humanity's sin, what sin is, God's judgment by flood, Noah's Ark as salvation, God's choosing of Abraham, the failure of the nation of Israel, the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, and His future return and judgment. She listened very attentively, nodding and smiling from time to time. During the special prayer meeting

afterward, Xiulan participated fully. We also prayed for her, asking the Lord to open her heart and bless her.

That evening, I asked her how she felt today. She said it was very good. When I told her that believing in Jesus—or becoming a Christian—is actually very simple: believe in your heart and confess with your mouth, she said: “No rush. Let me take it slowly. My whole family believes in Buddhism.”

It seemed her main obstacle was right there. The next day, she joined our Sunday worship. I specially gave her a women’s edition Bible, and she read it very seriously. Unfortunately, after the meeting ended, she received a phone call saying something urgent had happened at home and she had to leave. And so we parted ways.

Reflecting on this gospel-sharing process, our entry point was still appropriate, and we now know where her difficulty lies. If there had been more time, eating together and hearing testimonies from brothers and sisters might have been even better. We know that evangelism is a battle, and we need to pray earnestly for her, asking God to remove every hindrance and disturbance. At the same time, we asked the sister who invited her to continue following up, showing more care and building a deeper relationship with her. The seed of the gospel has been sown, just as the Scripture says: “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.” We hope this seed will be watered, that God will make it grow, and ultimately bear fruit, all to the glory of God.