



**East Gates**  
INTERNATIONAL

*Seeing Beyond the Impossible™*

May - June 2022

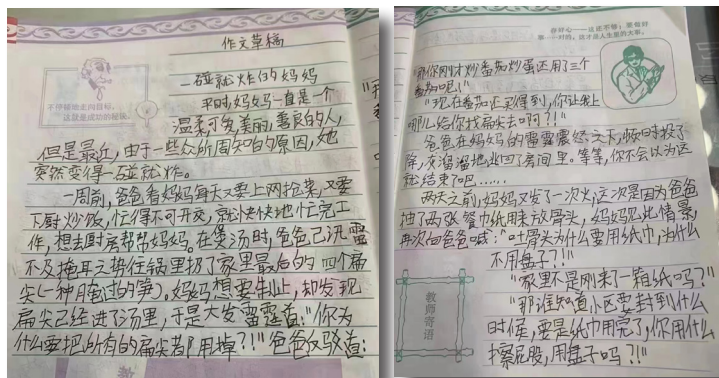
*D*ear East Gates partner,

Since our last newsletter, a major lockdown that began March 24th in Shanghai continues, although six of its 16 districts have COVID-19 restrictions slightly eased since they've "basically" achieved *Zero-COVID* status at the community level. What this means is that for three-consecutive days, the number of daily COVID-19 positive cases has been less than 1/100,000 of the district's total population. Given these stringent standards, major districts in Beijing have also been under lockdown affecting governmental offices, businesses, all educational institutions and more. In Chaoyang, Beijing's largest and most populous district, all workers who can, have been ordered to work from home.

Our East Gates staff and co-workers in Shanghai are still in lockdown mode but doing well. Despite their inability to travel, they've been able to accomplish much through the internet and other safe social media platforms. As usual, they've been able to stay connected with our co-workers throughout China who are not in the same lockdown mode and able to be their "hands and feet" on the ground.

As to be expected, these long term lockdowns are taking its toll on all sectors of China's society, especially the family. This personal, journal entry by a young Chinese girl is a good example. She was so upset with her present situation, she posted her frustrations online as if to inform the authorities, "Look at what's happening to us!" She describes how under normal conditions, her mother is gentle, lovely, beautiful and kind but with the recent longterm lockdowns, she has become very irritable and testy. For sake of space, we only translated one section of what this young girl shared but it gives you an idea of the tension and stress that exists behind closed doors these days.

*"T*wo days ago, mother got angry again because father put finished meat bones on two napkins. When mother saw it, she shouted, "Why did you place the bones on the napkins and not use a plate?" Father said, "There's a box of napkins at home." Mother said, "Who knows when the lockdown will end? Once the napkins are used up, what will you will use to clean your butt -- the plate?" Father continued eating his meal in silence.



The young girl's journal entry.

*N*ot only have food and every day necessities been in short supply but tempers and patience as well. Our staff say that during this time, many people are asking questions they've never taken the time to ask before like, "What is the real meaning of life? Who can I really trust? Where will I go when I die?" It's been an excellent opportunity to share with them God's words of Life and connect them with local Christians.

## FEELINGS OF LOCKDOWN

by Spring Breeze

*Over the past few months, we've received letters from Shanghai Christians sharing their innermost thoughts about the "marathon" lockdown. Spring Breeze's (pseudonym) letter was particularly moving so we thought we would share it with you. Please keep her and other believers in your prayers.*

“*T*he lockdown started today one month ago and it's been a “magic” month. From the beginning, I had only planned on being locked down for two days but then I began waiting for an indefinite period of time. Initially, I just worried about buying daily food but gradually I ran out of oil, paper products, seasonings, hand sanitizers, detergents and batteries. Shopping was once a simple matter of using apps and ordering food online through stores like the Metro or Sam's Club or going into a physical store and choosing things I wanted anytime, all at once. No more. Nowadays, in order for life to work, you have to find a group of people in your building or neighborhood and order things together and share, otherwise you don't get enough.

The arrival of the goods is an incomprehensible thing and everyone does not want to delay the volunteers with the delivery process so the group must be prepared to pick up the goods as soon as it arrives. Sometimes you have to jump between a dozen or more groups to grab the food. Depending on what your group gets and how things are shared, sometimes I have to think about having to use shower gel instead of hand sanitizer or find a substitute for laundry detergent.

In general, it's been over a month now and all of the involved personnel have become more organized so what we order arrives pretty much as expected. Popular items like coca cola, cakes, beer, etc. are not a problem. We've made good friends with those who control the blockade walls and barriers and it has made the neighborhood a lot closer. Today, soy products we've not seen for a month, shallots, spring onions and green garlic are coming! Nowadays, people who never grew vegetables have become vegetable lovers. In fact, people who don't grow green onions or use hydroponics feel like they're from an alien planet!

Also, this lockdown has made everyone focus on cleanliness. Before, every home didn't have all these different kinds of disinfectants, alcohol, cotton and disposable gloves. Now, everything that enters the house has to be sprayed, wiped, washed... tirelessly. Our regular rhythm to life has turned upside down and hoarding has become a necessity. In fact, just writing about this has not been easy. There has been much sadness and confusion every day. Flowers bought a month ago are now dried to make a flower basket as a souvenir.



During the Shanghai lockdown, volunteers have tried to meet the daily internet food orders as efficiently and quickly as possible.



Bagged vegetables wait to be loaded onto trucks or any type of motor vehicle for delivery throughout Shanghai.



Bags of disinfectant prepared for major distribution to all businesses and homes.



During this time, I've been thanking God for allowing us Christians to have a humble heart as we constantly examine ourselves to see if there is anything that we have done to offend Him or people. Christians know that everyone is a sinner and admitting sin and repenting is something we must all face. What a blessing it is that God has removed the obstacles to this process through His Son Jesus Christ. How wonderful it would be if everyone could be honest about it.

In addition, God has always taught in the Bible to “show mercy to the hungry, and to satisfy the needy” (Isaiah 58:10). “The LORD watches over the stranger and sustains the fatherless and the widow...” (Psalm 146:9). In this epidemic, we've seen some elderly people living alone and some construction site workers starving or having difficulties shopping. Some renovation workers were sealed off in the community. Christian sisters and neighbors heard about their situation and sent them food. Later, there was news that 200 workers at a construction site in Pudong had a food shortage problem. Some willing and able guys in the area took the time to gather a lot of food and daily necessities to give to them. It was a pleasure to take part in this. Overall, my church would like to do a lot more but we don't have the opportunity to always run into these kinds of people. We're asking the Lord to reveal His perfect will for us at this time so we can be His hands and feet during this lockdown.”

*I*t's inspiring to read about Spring Breeze's Godly perspective during this “wilderness” season when on a given day she's witness to the best and worst of humanity from either her own personal experiences or the news. She's a good example of one who truly partakes from the Living Bread and drinks from the Living Waters to bless others not just when it's easy but when it is hard. That's why East Gates continues to support young believers who have a heart to receive more Bible training so they can be a greater asset to their church upon graduation. In the past few years, Yunnan province has had the greatest need so that is where our focus has been. Shown below is the young man we just recently sponsored to attend Yunnan Theological Seminary.



Yunnan Theological Seminary staff and students.

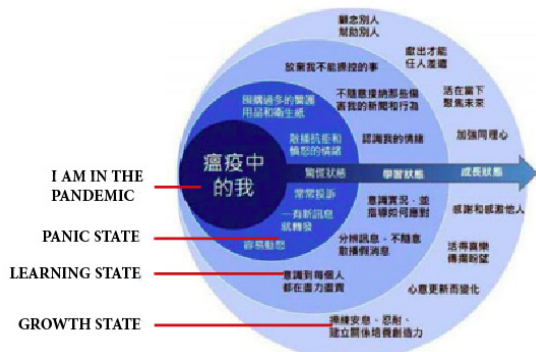


East Gates took care of this young man's seminary tuition. We make sure the potential student has a good pastoral reference and a heart to serve the church upon graduation.

*A* Chinese preacher, whom we work closely with, recently sent us a sermon that a fellow pastor/brother gave to his congregants on how they should grow from the COVID pandemic experience. He began with seven insights gained from the two month lockdown in Shanghai.

- 1) The collapse of idols and the refocusing on Jesus Christ. Idols give people a false sense of security which many are learning about now. Nothing is more secure than our Lord and Savior.
- 2) Rediscovering what is truly necessary in life. Since we are pilgrims on this earth, what has eternal worth?
- 3) Experiencing the humiliation of Christ in a small way. If one tests COVID positive, one is persecuted, ostracized and cast aside. Now we know a bit more how Jesus felt.

The pastor summarized his sermon with this chart which we've translated into English.



**PANIC STATE:** Hoards by overbuying medical supplies and toilet paper versus group buying and sharing. Spreads emotions of resistance. Easily angered. Always complaining. Immediately forwards any updated news.

**LEARNING STATE:** Releases what one cannot control. Doesn't accept news and behavior that can hurt one's soul. Aware of one's emotions. Conscious of one's situation and how to face it. Discerns information and doesn't spread fake news. Realizes everyone is trying their best.

**GROWTH STATE:** Takes care and helps others. Shares one's talents. Lives in the moment. Enhances empathy. Is thankful and expresses gratitude to others. Lives with joy and preaches hope. Is transformed by the renewing of one's mind. Practices rest and patience. Builds relationships and nurtures creativity.

*We live in a time where what affects one part of the world directly affects the other. There is much we can learn from how our Chinese brothers and sisters are weathering “the storm” as there are many more “storms” to come. May we all keep one another in devout prayer.*

Given all the challenges our brothers and sisters in China are facing, we asked our staff and co-workers to send this inspiring image below to everyone they knew. Our Chinese caption reads: ***This proves lockdowns don't work!***



## 证明封锁不起作用

**Yes! Our King and Savior has risen!!**

On Easter, a Yunnan church we've been sowing into for many years recently baptized 23 members into the family of God. They'll soon have a taste of what God's true power is all about as they celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2) on June 5, Pentecost, with their congregation.



*Thank you for your faithful offerings which enables God's true Light to overcome the darkness. God's Spirit is not quenched and the Body of Christ in China is growing!*

*Christina*

Ned and Christina