

Howard's Adventure Walk with the Lord

By Howard Killion, July 2006

I was born in San Bernardino CA in 1942 of Christian parents who introduced me to Jesus before I can remember. I learned, starting in high school, that life with Jesus was more than just a Free Ride. In my first year at Westmont College I announced that the last thing I wanted to do was to become a teacher (my father was a public school music teacher and had to work very hard). So, of course, I became one. After a PhD at Duke University I taught history for eight years at four different Christian liberal arts colleges. Two of them, including Wheaton College, survived the experience. The Michigan ones didn't.

In my last year at Duke I found a beautiful reference librarian, Daphne, who became my wife two years later. Our son Gideon was born in Michigan in 1975.

After my history teaching became "history" in 1979, the Lord continued my education: first as an inner city missionary in LA, and then, in Orange County CA, as an English teacher for Berlitz, a salesman of high tech foam, and the Director of Adult Ministries for a Presbyterian church.

God called us to missions in 1983. The Orange County church sent us to China where I taught English at a university for English Language Institute/China. We came home for six months in 1985 to raise more support so that we could move to Hong Kong. Once there I traveled regularly in China as a supervisor of ELIC English teachers. I learned enough Chinese to say "When train Beijing?" and "Me not speak Chinese."

While I was still teaching in China, we became a family of five. The Lord led us to adopt identical twin baby girls in the Philippines. I haven't time to explain now how this happened. But ask me sometime when we've got a quarter hour. Adding Elena and Maria to our lives was God's key move to enable me to teach a secret Bible study in China where five people came to trust in Jesus.

In 1989 we returned to the US so our kids could be raised as Americans. We joined ISI in order to continue work in cross-cultural ministry. In Eugene OR I coordinated church volunteers and assisted the campus ministry at the University of Oregon. Daphne, as a super volunteer, started a ministry to international wives that's still going strong. In 1995 we moved to the Denver area and I joined ISI's National Training Team. I trained staff, especially new ones, and edited and wrote ISI materials.

Our kids grown, we moved here to Oceanside CA in 2003 because I couldn't handle the Denver altitude anymore. Unkind acquaintances referred to this as "Howard's bad altitude issue." In 2005 the Lord saw me through a serious bout of illness due to complications following prostate surgery. It took me nearly a year to recover. But since then the Lord has enabled me to return to writing and editing again and—what fun!—I get to coach candidates and help them become new staff. In 2006 Sy, our first grandchild, was born in Denver. Life is good! The Lord is the best!