



LANDER, WYOMING  
*church of Christ*

**10x13ft Room** by Triston Jacobsohn, Shanghai China, 2011

What can you fit in a 10x13foot room? It would be a nice storage room. A bedroom. Perhaps a car.

How about a church meeting place? Sure! Where two or three are gathered....

But, how about where thirty are gathered?

These days I am blessed with more time to teach other groups around the city. The above-mentioned was the poorest so far. Cathleen and Una – our sisters and translators – accompanied me. Although Chinese I think they too were surprised. It had been raining, and the bare concrete floor was cold and muddied. It was about 34°F and there was no heating except for body heat. There they sat huddled in rows of seven on colorful 12-inch high plastic chairs.

BUT, if you thought this was an oppressed and unhappy group of people you'd be wrong. Their warm hearts shone through their eyes. One of the happiest seemed to be the lady with just one eye! Their singing shook the walls. They passionately "amened" after every line in every prayer, and then they sat focused for 90 minutes straight as I taught. In my opinion such long lessons are counter-productive – but they expected no less.

As the lesson proceeded, disturbances such as passing people, motorbikes, and a woman arguing were clearly heard from the outer darkness. Cathleen and I just had to speak louder.

We ended with questions. As it was Chinese New Year, many asked about the religious implications of fireworks. We stressed that they cannot be used to invite the money-god or to worship ancestors. There were questions about kneeling at ancestors' tombs, and how to deal with Buddhist family members who insist one join their worship – this was very heavy on one ladies heart, and her eyes watered as she explained how her in-laws forced her. The church family comforted her.

Then it was time to go. My friends and I boarded a bus, then a high-speed subway train home. Later when in my air-conditioned apartment with my family, I noticed how my bedroom was bigger than the meeting place.

God has blessed us for a reason. It is not to hoard, but to bless others in His Name – so that they too will know Him.

"What should we do then?" the crowd asked. John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same." Luke 3:10,11