

Transcript for “Thomas’ Reflections”

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Ni hao.

Hi. “Ni hao. (Speaks in Mandarin).”

“It’s in Mandarin”

Laugh

I start a workshop... at that time I was just new to Canada and I am trying to find a job and they can help me to correct my mistakes in English a little bit. So I’m very interested in their workshop.

When they started a study circle, book 1, and I learned a lot of ideas from Baha’u’llah’s writing and I am very shocked because this is 100 years ago and these writings we can also use at this time in this current society.

At first I really don’t know about the Bahá’í Faith because I don’t have any experience about this one so I borrowed some book from Iren and Varta and this book is written by one Chinese professor in Shandong University and this kind of program is supported by the Chinese government. It compares the Bahá’í Faith to Confucian culture. It has more praise for the Bahá’í Faith because it is moderated to the current culture. The professor encourages people not to believe the Bahá’í Faith but to learn the Bahá’í Faith - it has a lot of advantages we can use and we can apply.

The study circle is very helpful for the newcomer, just like me. When I came to Canada I started a study circle. I think there’s two important things. The first is about the community life, another thing is about the cultural differences. For the first, community life, I just came here with no friends or anything else. So from the study circle I just know the Bahá’í friends and I also know some people who attended the study circle. So I don’t feel lonely again. I feel just that if I have any difficulty or I have any problem the Bahá’í friends can help me so it’s very important for the newcomers.

Another thing is about the cultural difference. Before I came to Canada I thought maybe I will meet a cultural conflict. I really don’t know the Western culture but I just think maybe I will encounter these kinds of things. So when I attended the study circle I find that there are a lot of common things. It’s not a conflict. Also I can feel confident to communicate with other people who have a different background.

Before I just started the study circle I know God but in Chinese (culture) God is maybe just like in Buddhism or something else - there is a shape just like the human or something else. But after I started the study circle when I pray it’s not related to the material life it’s related to the spiritual life so it’s totally a different experience. So when I pray I feel a totally different thing.

Maybe I can't describe it very well because this prayer is related to the spirit's growth. It's not about any riches in the material sense or anything else so it's totally a different experience.