



Mike Cooke came to teach in China through the Amity Foundation. His students are all future teachers. After they graduate, they will go to rural junior middle schools (7-9 grades) to teach English. After Mike helps them with their own English skills, they will be able to help their students learn enough English to pass the college entrance examination, just like students from the big cities. (Without this “boost” many students from the countryside wouldn’t get a chance to go on to college because it is hard for them to pass the English part of the entrance examination.)

Mike and other Amity teachers from many different countries around the world are Christians. In fact, they are sent to China by their churches. The Amity Foundation, which has invited him to come and teach, was begun in 1985 by Chinese Christians leaders who wanted to find ways to for Chinese believers to show God’s love in action, to cooperate with others and to help the disadvantaged people in their own land. In doing this, the Amity Foundation also wants to make the Christian presence more widely known among their own Chinese people.

Though Mike can go freely to the local church, Chinese law does not permit foreigners to proselytize. This means that he cannot just go up to someone and say, “I believe in Jesus.... I think you should too....Please, come to church with me....” He can, however, answer any questions people ask him about his faith, and he can meet them at the church if they ask to do that. Mike tries to live a “ministry of presence.” His respect for the local believers and their own evangelism through their church and his “ministry of presence” is his witness to his faith.

1. If you were Mike Cooke, how would you feel?
2. If you were Mike Cooke, what would you do?
3. What do you think a “ministry of presence” means? How might this be a kind of evangelism?
4. How could you choose to live that “ministry of presence” where you live?