

This is a complete transcript of recording **Collection 215, Tape 5** created by **Ian Anderson** for the Overseas Missionary Fellowship. No spoken words which were recorded are omitted. In a very few cases, the transcribers could not understand what was said, in which case “[unclear]” was inserted. If the transcribers were not completely sure that they had the words correctly, a “[?]” was inserted. Also, grunts and verbal hesitations such as "ah" or "um" are usually omitted. Readers of this transcript should remember that this is a transcript of spoken English, which follows a different rhythm and even rule than written English.

. . . Three dots indicate an interruption or break in the train of thought within the sentence on the part of the speaker.

() Words in parentheses are asides made by the speaker.

[] Words in brackets are comments by the transcriber.

This transcript was created by Emily Banas was completed in July 2024.

Please note: This recording expresses the personal memories and opinions of the creator and does not necessarily represent the views or policies of Wheaton Archives & Special Collections or Wheaton College.

Collection 215, Tape 5. Recording of Ian Anderson recounting his work in village evangelism in China, ca. 1979.

Recording includes music and singing in English and Chinese. These portions have not been transcribed, but links to clippings of these portions as they appeared in the original recording are provided below. View the full list of musical selections from the tape [here](#).

Mother Helen and I had the privilege of teaching in Bible schools in China for more than 10 years. We tried to make the course of training as practical as possible. And village evangelism was compulsory for all students at least once a week. An indispensable part of our equipment was a roll of colored posters. And of course, it was a great help to have a musical instrument. The trumpet maybe or a concertina or a piano accordion. Even castanets or a drum or a pair of cymbals have been used. And a dinner gong is better than nothing. Arriving in a village, we found a convenient mud wall of somebody's house on which we hang up our colored posters. After that, we sing a few songs - making as much noise as possible, both vocal and instrumental. It doesn't matter too much if nobody understands the words we sing. The Chinese love noise and it soon attracts a crowd, first children and then adults. First of all, there's a song of welcome. A welcome to everybody - men and women, boys and girls, to come and hear the good news.

1:39 – [MUSIC CLIP 1](#)

The second song is entitled “Don't Lose your Temper.” The thing you have to realize is that our audience has never seen the Bible and knows nothing about Christianity. But they do know the man has a tiger in his heart. Sometimes he gets very angry. If he loses his temper, he becomes the laughingstock of the whole village. And the one he harms most is himself. The song I'm going to sing goes like this. “You don't want to get mad, but you do. Because there's a little demon of bad temper takes hold of you. You tell people what to do, but they won't obey you. And suddenly everything goes wrong. You will feel as if a ton of weight pressing down on you. So, you'd better just shake it off or you'll die a living death of frustration.”

2:54 – [MUSIC CLIP 2](#)

The third song is entitled “Admit you were in the wrong.” Nowadays, a husband-and-wife quarrel is not a joke. We feel sorry for both of them. But in a Chinese village a domestic quarrel provides first class free entertainment. The great crowd gathers to watch and listen. It's tragic. And yet, how easily it could have been avoided if both sides had taken their share of the blame. This song gives some good advice. “If you blame me and I blame you, then both of us are wrong. Sometimes you are wrong. Sometimes I am wrong. But if we always put the blame on the other fellow, we let the devil lead us on from bad to worse.”

4:15 – [MUSIC CLIP 3](#)

The fourth song is entitled “Meekness Comes First of All.” It's wrong to put all the blame on the Devil when we lose our tempers. That called “ego” inside us is the culprit, symbolized by the peacock on the “Heart” poster. We ought to learn how to be humbler. But in the ancient world,

humility was a vice and not a virtue, linked with weakness and compromise. Even today, the world despises humility, and there is still need for the Chinese song about the narrow gate that leads to meekness. And that's on the way to heaven too.

5:34 – [MUSIC CLIP 4](#)

Song five is called “The Foolish Fly.” Every preacher knows that the truth needs to be illustrated. Otherwise, people simply will not listen. Fortunately, the world around us is teeming with illustration. Many of them come from the animal Kingdom, as this “Heart” poster reminds us. That pesky little creature, the household fly, is too small to include in the posters, but it has a real lesson to teach sinners, if only they will listen. It goes like this “Oh, my brother, don't you see? Satan loves bewitchingly. So fun to sin, you run as a fly to trickle pie. In a moment, wings are stuck, so the fly is out of luck. Oh, what a tragic situation.”

6:54 – [MUSIC CLIP 5](#)

Song six is “The Busy Bee.” Yes, the fly had better keep away from molasses. That is, if he wants to go on flying. But I haven't yet heard of a bee getting stuck on a dish of honey. Perhaps it's because he has a hand in making the stuff, so he knows all about it. Just what is the bee famous for? He's not stupid like a fly. But he's so busy, he never has time to sit down and think, not even for a moment. And you can find people like that too. The village evangelist gets tired of hearing the same excuse again and again. I'm sorry, but I'm too busy. Yes, there's plenty of time for eating and drinking and sleeping, for business and pleasure. But when it comes to the one thing needful, they're too busy.

8:13 – [MUSIC CLIP 6](#)

The gospel is so simple a child can understand enough to be saved. The problem is not with a man's intelligence. It depends on his willingness to get rid of his sin burden. Like the camel. Laden with 200 lbs. of baggage. When it reaches the city gate, which is low and narrow, he must kneel down and let his master unload him. So, we have the Chinese song “Straight is the gate leading up to heaven. With sins burden you cannot get in. Why not wake up and repent for when Jesus comes back from heaven, then it will be too late. You would best be in time.”

9:22 – [MUSIC CLIP 7](#)

And the problem is not merely those acts of sin. But the polluted source from which they flow out. How can heart disease be cured when the heart is not a physical organ in our bodies, but a non-material spring of action? The second Chinese song tells us “Hearts of men are full of lies, desperately sick, no repairs can be done. They must be born again. All who come to Jesus, he can fully save. Come confess all your sins, roll your burden off.

10:23 – [MUSIC CLIP 8](#)

Yes, the Chinese coroners [?] has it straight – It's not so much what you do, but what you are that counts in God's sight. Energetic reform may reduce the number of sins per day, but the heart remains unchanged. It must be borne again. Even if you decide to be religious and go to church, they may not do you any good at all for your attitude of mind was all wrong, even as you went to the sanctuary you were in such a hurry, your heart was unprepared for blessing. So, song #3 tells us “If the church you go in haste by four demons, you'll be chased, one will make you fall asleep. One will keep your mind outside. One will make your brain confused. One will help you to forget. Come quickly. Lord, drive out the demons.”

11:41 – [MUSIC CLIP 9](#)

Song #4 further describes the sinner's resistance to all that goes on in church. “In church, I sit dozing quietly, never singing hymns or praying as I should. Scripture I dislike. Sermons I detest. Let me search my heart. What sort of man am I?”

12:34 – [MUSIC CLIP 10](#)

Exposes the basic problem, not the mediocrity of the pastor or of the service, but a proud heart inside me. The Song #5 tells us “Arrogant and haughty, too, all so proud, constantly I tell folks ‘Oh, what a good boy am I,’ disobedient, cursing other folk. That's because Satan stirs up trouble in my heart.”

13:19 – [MUSIC CLIP 11](#)

Yes, the effort to bolster up my ego makes me wrong and my attitude to others. And worst of all, it brings pain to God's heart of love. “Day after day,” says song number six, “how I grieve, my Lord, how I'm prone to sin and carnal selfishness, giving way to pride and envious at heart, looking down on folks, criticizing them.”

14:07 – [MUSIC CLIP 12](#)

Did you ever find yourself in quicksand? If so, it's a wonder you're alive today. The poor fellow in the quicksand sinks lower and lower till he's up to his neck in wet sand. The more he struggles, the deeper he sinks. It's the same with the Sinner. Fortunately, there is someone who has come to the rescue. The Chinese tell the story in a very lengthy song, with 20 stanzas. The sufferings of Christ first is poverty, born in a cowshed, then as a man 30 days without food in the wilderness, betrayed by a false friend, sweating drops of blood, then arrested, scourged and mocked, nailed to a cross of wood. Even God seemed to have forsaken him.

15:21 – [MUSIC CLIP 13](#)

Therein lies the mystery of the cross. It's not merely a good man suffering unjustly for sinners, it's God himself bearing the penalty of all human sins and opening the way to pardon and reconciliation for all who will believe. That's the message of John 3:16. “God so loved the world.”

16:27 – [MUSIC CLIP 14](#)

Some religious folk seemed to think the cross was the end of Jesus. Emphatically that is not true. On the third day, that Great Shepherd of the sheep was raised from the dead. Alive today, he is well able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him. As the Chinese chorus expresses it, “Shepherd, good and true is He. Cares for all His sheep, gave His life for me. Tigers, wolves, wind and snow did not frighten thee. If in Him you trust. Follow Him you must. Uphill to the top. There the sun shines bright. Heaven and Earth proclaim his mercy. Set your mind at rest.”

17:35 – [MUSIC CLIP 15](#)

New life has begun. Since you trusted him, love has filled your heart, love for God and love for men. But faith and love are not the only virtues. Hope like a beacon shines across the path, even in dark hours. Again, the Chinese chorus tells us “Lift up your heads for your redemption draws nigh. Look beyond the blue sky, where fleecy clouds are floating. Think of the day when Jesus returns and the trumpet sounds. In a moment you'll be transformed, and he will be waiting to meet you in the air. Then you will ascend. Leading the dust of the earth low beneath your feet, you see the great globe and beyond it, myriads of stars. Angels will come out in heavenly array to meet you, their faces wreathed in smiles and clapping their hands. And the Lord himself will take us to His bosom, and we shall be forever with Him, no more separations.”

19:14 – [MUSIC CLIP 16](#)

Leaving all for Him.

20:34 – [MUSIC CLIP 17](#)

“Jesus, I my cross have taken, all to leave and follow thee. Worldly fame and wealth and pleasure seemed to me like refuse now.”

Nobody would accuse the communists of being lazy bones. At least they see to it that other people have to work very hard. Their favorite word is “sunshine production.” After 8 or 10 hours of physical toil in fields or factories, there are indoctrination classes after supper and well into the night. So, if hard work could save a man's soul, the rural workers of China would be well on their way to salvation. But in fact, by the elimination of leisure time, the laws have made it well-nigh impossible for Christians to have regular seasons of worship and Bible study and prayer and witness, even in the hidden church. Busy, busy, busy. They are so busy eating, drinking, working, not a thought of heaven. Jesus died for their sins on the cruel cross. But busy people perish if they won't believe.

22:05 – [MUSIC CLIP 18](#)

You and I do not know enough of the dark side of life in a communist state. The long-drawn-out agony of the prisoner in jail, under threat of torture and execution, and the almost equal misery of free men outside who got the feeling the whole world is one vast prison house. For nobody is

sure that calamity will not befall him on the morrow. Hebrews 2:14 “Jesus died that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those who fear death was subject to lifelong bondage.” An old lady in China said “I’m not afraid to die. And I’m not afraid to go on living. What I do fear is a long life of drawn-out suffering.” All of us would sympathize. Sharp pain for a minute can be accepted courageously, but managing discomfort extended for weeks and months seems calculated to break the strongest heart.

Remember the tree that Moses cast into the waters of bitterness which made them sweet? Exodus 15:25. Well, the picture of the Cross of Christ - burden and blessing, pain and pleasure. Now the cross is sanctified. Peace is there that knoweth no measure. Joy that through all tongue abide. If only we know it is His hand that holds us in the furnace of affliction. The pain lingers on, but it is tolerable. It will not go on a moment longer than necessary. Here now the Chinese song “Bear the Cross,” “Spread the word. Peace, perfect peace. Jesus leads me on the road to Heaven’s final bliss. What are trials [?], if to Him I’m true. That the cross leads to the crown of His righteousness. Jesus surely will return to take us home. On that day[?], let shine and burn, saving them for him. Pray at all times with the word. You won’t miss the world when His blessed face we see. What Glory that will be.”

24:29 – [MUSIC CLIP 19](#)

“Alas, the world is dreaming and half asleep. Yet struggling to attain to wealth and honor, but all their toil is vain. Who were awaiting them to realize it? Fellow countrymen, fathers and brethren hasten to believe the gospel truth and to turn from darkness to light, strive to enter by the narrow gate, and you will gain eternal life. For the broad way leads to the City of Destruction, so choose the good way and walk in it.”

26:09 - [MUSIC CLIP 20](#)

A friend in China used to say, “This world is like a saltwater lake. The more you drink its water the thirstier you get.” She was almost quoting Solomon, the wealthy monarch, who had endless opportunities to make experiments in quests of satisfaction. Thailand sexual workers have to learn the same lesson in the hard way. Sometimes our friends used to use the Western tune to make a song of their own: “Earthly things are vanities, limited always. Beneath the sun, tis grasping for wind and shadow. What’s the profit gaining the world, if your soul is lost. Come repent and trust in the Lord today.”

27:29 – [MUSIC CLIP 21](#)

“Human life in this world brings vexation down. Labor lasts from dusk to dawn. You can only guess what tomorrow holds. Clouds of care in your heart you cannot disperse. God knows it all. Grace is greater than your need, your anxiety.”

28:44 – [MUSIC CLIP 22](#)

When a Cambodian refugee whose family had been killed; his house has been burned; he was sick and penniless; escaped to Thailand and is unwanted - When he says life is meaningless, we say of course and nod in assent. But when the richest and wisest and most influential monarch on Earth, with 1000 wives and good religion and health, says it, we shake our heads with incredulity. The contemporary example is a monarch who had been exiled from his own country. He is a symbol of the futility of money. Reputed to be perhaps the wealthiest man in the world, who would want to change places with him? Afflicted with terminal cancer. He still...his...unwanted millions would like to have him killed. He used to live in a palace that glittered and sparkled with gold and silver and diamonds. Now he is a world problem.

By contrast, the poorest, weakest believer in Jesus has fallen heir to God's unsearchable riches in Christ. Right here and now he enjoys the peace of God that passes understanding. I once met a Chinese who got converted through an open-air message on Ecclesiastes. "Vanity of vanities. All is vanity." And when he heard it, he slapped his hand on his thigh, saying, "That's absolutely right. It's high time I went to Jesus." Soon after, he too was preaching the unpopular doctrine that all is vanity. It was one of John Songs' favorite songs. Ten years later, they realized what it meant for an evil power had spread atheism over the land, and life had become meaningless for most people. I think I'll sing it first in English and then in Chinese.

31:29 – [MUSIC CLIP 23](#)

Under the cruel pressure of a communist state, many have cracked up and committed suicide. And there's no lack of good advice. The government tells you one thing. Relatives urge something different, and you yourself are thinking that plan #3. A young man in this predicament said, "I am afraid of what will happen if I become a believer." And an old granny replied, "If I were you, I would be afraid not to believe." But the song goes like this: "You may have 1000 plans. But one plan of God's is the best. All of your worries, all of your burdens, roll them in Jesus. Ask him to bear them. Oh, what bliss. Oh, what rest. Oh, what content."

33:48 – [MUSIC CLIP 24](#)

The valley of the shadow of death. One of the distinguishing features of a Christian in a heathen land is his attitude to death. Pagan funerals alternate between the rolling and howling of hired mourners and the genuine crushing sorrow of mere relatives who have no hope of reunion in a joyful resurrection morning. As far as they know, they have parted forever from the one they love. Atheists in a communist state can put on a show of unconcern in the presence of death, for they liken death to the snuffing out of a candle. Only when death comes close to them does their careless indifference change rapidly, and a nameless dread comes to the surface. A fear of something worse than annihilation. The torments of the lowest hell described by Buddhism come to mind. No wonder the Inquirer in our story was deeply impressed by the behavior of Christians at the funeral of a loved one. Among the mourners there was peace for Mrs. Marr had gone home to be with Jesus, and even the note of triumph, for she had finished her course with Joy. And one day they would meet again. The song that they used to sing about this runs, "Father God, hallowed be thy name. Life and death at thy bidding come. Men are like grass. They must wither in the frost and like candles blown out in the wind are lost. Oh God, forever and forever thou art

the same. When the long night passes, when the sun arises, light the golden flame.”

35:52 – [MUSIC CLIP 25](#)

What is the greatest mental torture known to a child? It is described by him when he says, “They all laughed at me.” And he is describing real pain. The [?] exploit this to the poor with Christian adults. The victim is compelled to stand on a platform before hundreds of people, while a chain of speakers one by one accuse him of crimes against the state or because he is a Christian. The way of victory is to despise World of Fortune and make Heaven your home. I’ll sing the little song first in English and then in Chinese.

37:08 – [MUSIC CLIP 26](#)

Cock-a-doodle-doo. The Chinese have a parable and song based on the everyday activities of a rooster as it struts proudly around the yard. It's always bothering the hens and getting in the way of busy farmers. The rooster is a very earthly minded creature, always pecking in the dirt trying to find something good to eat. One day, the farmer is so irritated he aims a blow at the rooster with his pitchfork. And in a moment of panic and dire distress, the rooster suddenly discovers it has legs and wings. And flies up to the housetop. He awakens to the fact that His Creator intended him not to putter about the yard, getting in the farmer's way, but soaring upwards on things of faith and prayer, to sing aloud and praise to God. Cock-a-doodle-doo. The song goes something like this, "Though I'm just a cock, hear me as I talk, for my aim in life is not to trouble folks. By my God, I'll fly to the roof so high. Cock-a-doodle-doo. Sing God's praise and you.”

40:02 – [MUSIC CLIP 27](#)

The second verse reminds us that on one occasion the rooster was a principal performer on the stage of history. In AD 30, just before the crucifixion, when the Rooster had a share in alerting the chief apostle to the sin of denying his Lord three times and leading him to tears of repentance and restoration. Yes, the same Peter who was so mightily used on the day of Pentecost, needed the call of the Rooster to arouse him from backsliding and cowardly denial. The words go like this: “Cock-a-doodle-doo. Peter heard it crow. Made him then to know that Jesus told him so. How he had denied Christ the Crucified. From the hall went he, weeping contritely.”

41:15 – [MUSIC CLIP 28](#)

END OF TAPE