

Here's a "readers' theatre" look at some missionaries. It can be used in a classroom with or without practice. All you need are some good readers.

Three Missionary Profiles

These brief plays profile the lives of Lottie Moon, C.T. Studd and the Hudson Taylors. It was originally performed as a single play in three acts. However, it can easily be broken up and performed or read as three separate one-act plays.

These portrayals show these missionaries as real people with warts and frailties. It is hoped that people, on seeing these performances, will realize that one need not be a saint to go into global missions work.

This play may be performed without charge by any school, church or religious group, provided no more than 5% of its original content is changed.

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The Life of Lottie Moon

Written by David Prata

ANNOUNCER: *(offstage)* Lottie Moon was born in 1840 in Virginia where she grew up on her family's tobacco plantation.

Some have said that a divine calling, an adventuresome spirit and a feminist impulse were the main factors in the nineteenth century that created a surge of single women into world missions. Indeed, those three things -- a sense of calling, adventuresome spirit and a feminist impluse -- were what thrust Lottie Moon into a fruitful life of missionary service.

LOTTIE: *(Entering from stage left, looking up for the voice of the announcer)* Excuse me, but you are leaving a few things out.

ANNOUNCER: And who, madam might you be?

LOTTIE: I might be your great aunt Minnie, but as it happens, I am Lottie Moon, and I will tell this story myself if you don't mind, sir.

ANNOUNCER: By all means, ma'am . . . be my guest.

LOTTIE: I come from quite a family. Not only was my sister Oriana a doctor, but she was the first female medical doctor south of the Mason-Dixon line. She even served as a medical missionary among Palestinian Arabs until the

American Civil War broke out. Then Oriana returned home to Virginia to treat the wounded of the Confederate Army.

I was educated as were my brother and five sisters. While I was away at college, I became somewhat . . . rebellious . . . and turned against my strict Baptist upbringing. We southern ladies are not all mint juleps and lace, you know. Then we had a revival on campus that changed my life. I went to one of those revival services to scoff and wound up going back to my room to pray all night. That night, I was saved. Saved in order to do something I did not yet know.

After college I went home to help run the family plantation. Then, the War between the States broke out. My brothers and sisters marched off to serve the stars and bars as doctors, spies and elite guerrilla soldiers while I had to stay home with my widowed mother, missing all the excitement.

After the war I started teaching in a little school in Cartersville, Georgia. Are any of you teachers? Then you know how boring it can be, especially in a little one-room schoolhouse in the middle of nowhere, trying to drum some knowledge into a bunch of seemingly dense farm children.

I longed for more. I longed for a life of Christian ministry and adventure. This, I knew, was why God had saved me that night at the revival.

ANNOUNCER: In 1872, Lottie's teenage sister, Edmonia, received funding as a missionary and left for China.

LOTTIE: Oh, I see you're back.

ANNOUNCER: Hey, I've got a job to do. May I continue?

LOTTIE: By all means, sir.

ANNOUNCER: The following year, Lottie, by now a confirmed spinster

LOTTIE: I BEG your pardon, sir!

ANNOUNCER: I mean, Lottie, now a mature woman, followed Edmonia to China.

LOTTIE: Excuse me, I think I'd better take over again and tell this the right way. I did not FOLLOW my little sister. I went to try to help her. You see, life was not easy in Tengchow, where she worked.

Edmonia had always been a little weak and sickly. I got word that she had begun to suffer physical ailments and seizures. When I arrived I discovered

her doing strange and unusual things. She had become a burden to the missionary community in China. Just between you and me, she was absolutely good for nothing. So, in 1877, I sent her home and stayed on to take over her responsibilities.

ANNOUNCER: Freed of duty as her sister's nursemaid, Lottie became an active participant in missionary work, but she soon became depressed, as she wrote home to her supporters . . .

LOTTIE: "I am especially bored to death living alone. I don't find my own society either agreeable or edifying . . . I really think a few more winters like the one just passed would put an end to me. This is no joke, but dead earnest".

ANNOUNCER: A possible cure for Lottie's loneliness presented itself in the form of Crawford Toy, an old beau who had courted Lottie back in the U.S. Toy suggested they marry and serve as missionaries together in Japan. Lottie refused the proposal.

LOTTIE: Wait. You aren't telling the whole story. I very much liked the idea of a mission to Japan. And, I very much liked Crawford.

ANNOUNCER: Then what was the problem?

LOTTIE: Well, Crawford fancied himself an intellectual and had been influenced by some German scholars to accept the theory of Darwinian evolution. I read up on the subject and concluded that evolution was such an untenable position that his acceptance of it was significant enough to preclude marriage.

ANNOUNCER: But, didn't you love Crawford Toy?

LOTTIE: Yes, but God had first claim on my life, and since the two conflicted, there could be no question about what I should do. Crawford eventually married someone else and went on to teach Hebrew and Semitic languages at Harvard University.

And I, . . . I continued in my routine of drudgery. Let me tell you, the romantic ideal of missionary work had long since faded. I simply do not understand and cannot reach these Chinese. It is impossible to teach them. They have dull minds. I had come to China to go out among the millions and evangelize, and here I was chained to a school of 40 unstudious children.

I tell you, relegating women to such roles is the greatest folly of modern missions. Can we wonder at the weariness and disgust, the sense of wasted

powers and the conviction that her life is a failure that comes over a woman when, instead of the ever-broadening activities she had envisioned, she finds herself tied down to the petty work of teaching a few girls?

ANNOUNCER: Lottie's comments caused a stir in the missions community, not because she felt them, but because she published them in letters as articles to missionary magazines. One Mrs. Arthur Smith took great exception . . .

Announcer in a falsetto voice to imitate Mrs. Smith: Lottie Moon is a disgrace. Such signs of female liberation are repulsive. She must be mentally unbalanced for craving such lawless prancing all over the mission lot. The proper role of a female missionary is to attend with a quivering lip to her own children.

LOTTIE: Well, since I had no children of my own, it was nigh impossible for me to live up to Mrs. Smith's ideal of a woman missionary. Well, if that's the way they felt, I did not need children. Dangerous and difficult as it was, I started traveling about in the countryside to see if I could find my ideal of missionary work.

Besides, I was anxious to get out from under the thumb of my field supervisor, Mr. T. P. Crawford. The man was exasperating. He did not believe in missions schools, and he so severely limited missionary salaries that we were reduced to the status of paupers. If that be "freedom," then give me slavery.

The man even alienated his own wife Martha with his bull-headed policies. Simple justice demands that women should have equal rights with men in mission meetings and in the conduct of their work.

ANNOUNCER: Lottie moved to P'ing-tu, but life there was no easier. As Lottie walked through the narrow streets and wandered around the small villages, she was followed by cries of "devil". She slowly made friends with some of the women, but found it seemingly impossible to reach those ladies with the Gospel without having first reached the men. Then, in 1887, after more than a decade of work, Lottie saw her first breakthrough.

LOTTIE: Three men from a nearby village came to my door and said they wanted to know more about this new doctrine of mine which the women were talking about. They invited me to their village to hear about the Gospel.

When I got there, I found something I had never found before in China: eagerness to learn! Such spiritual desires! I was so excited to at last be doing that which I knew the Lord wanted. I immediately sent for Martha Crawford to assist me.

Despite local opposition, we founded a church. In 1889 the first baptismal services were conducted by an ordained Baptist minister. Over the next two decades, the church grew, I think, in part, because we kept it as free from foreign interference as possible. Li Shou Ting, the pastor, baptized more than a thousand souls and our little church became the greatest Southern Baptist evangelistic center in China!

For years, I lived two separate lives in China. I spent part of each year out in the villages, evangelizing the Chinese people. The rest of the year I spent in Tengchow, teaching new missionaries, counseling Chinese women and writing.

I appealed to Baptist women to take a stronger role in missions. I found it odd that a million Baptists of the American south could furnish only three men for all of China. Odd that with 500 preachers in the state of Virginia, we had to rely on a *Presbyterian* to fill a Baptist pulpit in China. I wonder how these things look in heaven? They certainly look very strange in China . . . Our women are the answer. The Methodist mission almost collapsed before the women shored it up. Why can't Baptist women do the same?

I sent out a special appeal for a week of prayer at Christmas and a special collection to be taken up by women, for women and directed solely toward missions. My greatest hopes were exceeded! The grace of God blessed us, and we collected more than a thousand dollars over our goal, which sent an additional woman into the field.

After the turn of the century, things got very difficult in China. The Boxer Rebellion forced me to leave China for a time. Then there were outbreaks of plague and smallpox, followed by a famine and a local insurrection around Tengchow. I organized a relief mission with funds from the U.S., but my own missions board refused to help.

ANNOUNCER:

Lottie did all that one person could do. But, her efforts seemed trifling in the face of tragedy on such a large scale. Lottie drew her last pennies out of the bank to provide for her mission and for the Chinese people around Tengchow. Then, with her funds exhausted and death all about her, Lottie lapsed into a depression. She quit eating, and her physical and mental health deteriorated. When a doctor finally arrived, Lottie Moon was in the process of starving to death. She was ordered evacuated immediately, but it was too late. Lottie Moon died on Christmas Eve, 1912, one week after her seventy-second birthday.

Lottie Moon stands as a symbol of what women in missions can do. In the years since her death, the Lottie Moon Christmas offering has grown to over 150 million dollars annually. At the time of Lottie's death, The Southern

Baptist Foreign Missions Journal paid her the highest compliment they could, saying that she was "the best man among our missionaries".

A Character Study of C. T. Studd

Written by David Prata

ANNOUNCER:

Unlike single women, many of whom raised their status in life by entering foreign mission service, the student volunteers of the nineteenth century were mainly young men who, in the eyes of the world, had lowered their status by stooping to do missionary work. It was alright for women to go abroad in missions work since they would only have amounted to parlor maids or office assistants anyway. However, sending brilliant young university men to a mission field was a waste of talents and a crying shame.

The Student Volunteer Movement lasted for about 50 years and fielded some 20,000 missionaries. By 1920 the movement had peaked and started to decline. Many of the students approached missions as their forbearers had the crusades. They were accused of being fanatics. Many made serious mistakes in their evangelization. But, because of their sheer numbers and youthful exuberance, they accomplished much that more staid and conservative missionaries could not. One of the most influential of those student volunteers, C. T. Studd, was born in 1870 on Tedworth, his family estate in Wiltshire, England.

STUDD:

Good morning. I am Charlie Studd. I will be sharing my view of foreign missions with you this morning. I see some of you were late getting here today. I'll have you know that I have been up since dawn, attending to my prayers and devotions. I certainly hope you do not take this slack attitude toward all your endeavors.

Yes. Well. . . . Enough said about that I hope.

I was raised in England. My father was quite wealthy, having amassed a fortune as a planter in India. One of father's great passions was horse racing. He owned a number of horses which he entered in races all over Britain. It was one of the high points of his life when one of his horses won the Grand National. In Great Britain, that's something tantamount to winning the Kentucky Derby in the U.S.A.

One year, my father attended one of D. L. Moody's evangelistic campaigns and was converted. The effect on him was immediate and stunning. My father sold his horses, gave up racing and began holding gospel meetings on

the estate. My two brothers and I were particularly conspicuous targets of his constant evangelization. Father refused to give up. I tell you this: everyone in the house had a dog's life of it until they were converted. Before father's death, we were all converted, in one fashion or another.

My own conversion was rather half-hearted until I attended a Moody campaign on my own. I was so moved that then and there I dedicated my life to God and foreign missions. At first, my decision was not popular at Cambridge University, where I was one of the "Cambridge Eleven", and probably the best cricketer in all the British Empire.

I talked of my decision to some of the other lads, and sure enough, six of them decided to join me in going overseas as foreign missionaries. We became known as the "Cambridge Seven".

ANNOUNCER: The newspapers of the day heralded this as the most unique band ever to set out to labor on a foreign mission field. Others were less calm, including members of Studd's own family, calling the undertaking a rash move and a tremendous waste of intellect and ability.

STUDD: Yes, well . . . they simply didn't understand this view I had of the missions field.

The seven of us sailed for China . . . the beginning of a decade-long project that saw us very busy and quite successful in our endeavors.

On a personal level, I was successful in wooing and marrying a most godly woman, Priscilla Steward, a Salvation Army missionary. Life was not easy for us in China. For five years we never ventured out our front door without being bombarded by the curses of our neighbors. Still, our work advanced, I with opium addicts, and Priscilla with the women. During this time, we also had four daughters born to us on Chinese soil.

We missionaries also faced financial hardships in China. For many other missionaries, those hardships were forced upon them. In my case, it was a matter of choice. You see, my father had left me a sum equal to half a million dollars in today's terms. But, I felt we should share the same trials as other missionaries, and so I gave it all away. Priscilla was not terribly happy with my philanthropy, but there you are.

ANNOUNCER: Ill health forced Studd and his family to return to England in 1894. He spent the next 6 years traveling throughout England and America speaking out for world missions.

STUDD: My speeches over the years swayed many in favor of devoting their lives to

the Lord's service in foreign missions. We were blessed with bountiful harvests of new workers in the field.

Buoyed by this success, I decided to accept the challenge of ministering to the English-speaking planters and their families in India. However, being away from direct evangelism was unfulfilling for me. I missed the battle for the souls of the unbelievers. After six years in India, feeling ill and weak, we returned to England. I continued speaking and preaching there, but truthfully I no longer felt that I was in the center of God's will.

Then, one day, as I walked by a doorway in a mission board office, I saw a sign which read, "Cannibals want missionaries".

That sign changed the course of my life. Upon inquiry, I learned that there were hundreds of thousands of tribal people in Central Africa who had never once heard the gospel because no Christian had ever gone to tell them of Jesus.

The shame of that realization sank deep into my soul. I asked God why no Christian had gone. He answered me, "Why don't you go?"

I replied that the doctors would not permit it.

And God said to me, "Am I not the Great Physician? Can I not take you through? Can I not keep you there?"

I had been convicted. There were to be no excuses. I was Moses, and the Lord's will had to be done.

ANNOUNCER: Studd's decision to go to Africa devastated Priscilla. She suffered from a debilitating heart condition and could not go. Besides, she reasoned, Studd was 50 years old, sickly and had no financial backing. Studd ignored all pleas to reason and embarked for Africa. Studd eventually spent 18 years in the Congo. Even news of Priscilla's worsening condition could not sway him to reconsider.

STUDD: What could I do? I ask you. The work of the Lord must come before family matters. I have a mission. I am the tool of the Lord. I must go where He sends me. Nothing, absolutely nothing will deter me from this course.

ANNOUNCER: In 1916, Studd returned home on furlough and found that Priscilla had improved -- so much so that she was now running the main office for his new Heart of Africa Mission. This convinced Studd that he had done the right thing and must continue to follow his instincts.

STUDD: What a glorious time it was. More recruits kept arriving in Africa, including my daughter Edith who married my assistant, Alfred Buxton. Also, my daughter Pauline and her husband Norman Grubb came to help. Oh, the numbers who came to help.

Alas, for the most part they were slackers who did not understand the meaning of hard work. My days consisted of 18 hours of work in the forests and villages of my flocks. These new helpers balked at such a pace. However, if I -- as sickly as I was supposed to be -- could do it, why couldn't they? They were always asking for a day off for rest and recreation. Why is not the work of the Lord enough for them? I have sacrificed wealth, family and health in this endeavor and they can do the same or they can leave!

ANNOUNCER: Tension grew between Studd and his missionaries. Even his daughter thought him difficult to get along with. Whereas the missionaries were, because of Studd's positive letters home, expecting to find hundreds of smiling new saints, what Studd said to them when they arrived painted a totally different scenario. Even his theology seemed to have changed.

STUDD: These natives are rife with sin I tell you. And, nobody continuing in sin can go into heaven. I doubt if even ten in five hundred will ever get there. And I refer not just to gross immorality, but to sin that even taints their work ethic. One of the worst sins of these people is a terrible laziness. To sit about on a chair and talk seems to be the desire of everybody. To work is folly. For instance, Norman Grubb suggested that the natives and the missionaries hold a daily prayer meeting together for revival. And, he actually thought we would take this time out of the work day. I do not believe in praying in work hours. So we got everyone up at 4:00 am for the prayer meeting and then went about our work.

ANNOUNCER: As Studd continued in his driven way, he began to lose supporters. Eventually, he even dismissed his own daughter Edith and her husband, Alfred Buxton, who had been with him from the start. Studd's wife Priscilla died in England in 1929. With her passing, his support in the mission's home office all but vanished. To make matters worse, a booklet he had written upset many Christians.

STUDD: They do not understand. I am intense. We do need to be intense, and our intensity must ever increase. I am a Gambler for God. I will continue to be such until my final breath and my final hallelujah! We are in a very battle for souls here. How can I slack off? How can I allow anyone else to slack off. We must be willing to give our very lives to the effort.

And to make an issue of a little booklet! All right, I admit it. I wrote a

booklet which I titled D. C. D. In it, I tried to confront the lethargy of today's Christians. Yes, the title stands for "don't care a damn", because "I want to be one of those who doesn't care a damn except to give my life for Jesus and souls."

ANNOUNCER: News reaches the home office that Studd was addicted to morphine.

STUDD: Addicted to morphine? . . . I was weak, ill and in constant pain from gallstones, asthma, several heart attacks, dysentery and malaria. Morphine was the only way to go on --. to keep working day after day, hour after hour. I was seventy years old! How much longer would I last anyway? Morphine made the pain bearable and gave me enough energy to continue.

Do you not eat every day to give you energy and to help you carry on? Are you then addicted to food? Why should I not partake of the wonderful medicines provided by the Great Physician if it helps me advance His work on this earth?

ANNOUNCER: Studd's objections notwithstanding, the board ordered him home to England. But, within two weeks, while still in Africa, God called Charlie Studd to his final home. C.T. Studd died of untreated gallstones. The last word from his mouth was "Hallelujah!" As Studd's body lay in state outside his simple little hut, thousands of Africans came to pay their respects to the "crazy Englishman".

Norman Grubb took over the reins of what was now called the Worldwide Evangelical Crusade or WEC. Today WEC reaches all over the globe, fielding today more than 500 missionaries. Norman Grubb remained a relentless defender of his father-in-law, the man with a vision.

A Character Study of the Hudson Taylors

Written by David Prata

Setting: *Maria and Jennie Taylor, Hudson's first and second wives are seated on clouds in heaven, knitting, drinking tea and re-living some high points of Hudson Taylor's life. Taylor himself speaks from time to time, but is never seen on stage.*

MARIA: Jennie, would you ever have believed when you were young, that you would be married to one of the most influential missionaries in the world?

JENNIE: No, Maria. It would have been the farthest thing from my mind, as would meeting you here, like this. But, I am so glad that it happened this way. It is simply wonderful.

MARIA: I wonder if Hudson ever envisioned anything like this?

JENNIE: Well, I doubt he ever thought you and I would meet here and become such fast friends, but he did eventually foresee his place in the grand scheme of missions. But, it was a far cry from his beginnings.

MARIA: *(laughing)* I know. He was such a scalawag when he was young. Even though Bible reading was a part of his upbringing, Hudson Taylor was a typical boy. He wasn't converted until he was seventeen, you know. It was in 1849 and his mother was away visiting friends. Hudson stumbled over some religious tracts in his father's library and started reading them. They really struck him.

HUDSON: As I read, I fell under a joyful conviction . . . light was flashed into my soul by the Holy Spirit . . . There was nothing in the world for me to do but to fall down on my knees and, accepting this Savior and His salvation, to praise Him forevermore.

JENNIE: Yes, he told me about that too. What a wonderful experience for him! When his mother came home, he told her about it, but she was not surprised. At the very moment of his conversion, she had felt an urge to pray for him and did so until she was sure God had answered her prayers.

MARIA: At that point, Hudson set his sights on foreign missions and never looked back. Being practical, he knew he needed more than zeal . . . he needed a useful skill to give him entrée into the mission fields. That's when he began studying medicine, first with a local doctor and later at the London hospital.

JENNIE: At the same time he also began training his will and his body. Hudson set out on a course of self-denial as additional preparation for missionary work. His entire diet was a pound of apples and a loaf of bread a day. His attic room was sparsely furnished. He wouldn't even remind his employer about his overdue wages!

HUDSON: I knew that when I got to China, I would have no claim on anyone for anything. My only claim will be on God. How important, therefore, to learn before leaving England to move man, through God, by prayer alone.

MARIA: Yes, well it was almost his undoing. His mother was beside herself with worry. His meager diet did not give him enough nourishment to sustain him. Then, in anatomy class he came into contact with an infected corpse and

almost died of a fever. He almost disciplined himself right into the grave.

JENNIE: Of course, denying himself food was one thing . . . Denying himself female companionship was another. Did Hudson ever tell you how many women he had proposed to?

MARIA: Not in exact numbers, no; but I gathered it was quite a few. It isn't surprising . . . Hudson Taylor always seemed so lonely and vulnerable.

JENNIE: I thought the same thing. Even at 21 he had proposed to and had been rebuffed by Miss Vaughn.

MARIA: That was just before he left for China the first time.

JENNIE: Yes, the Chinese Evangelical Society, which had underwritten his medical training learned that a Christian emperor sat on the Chinese throne. They wanted as many missionaries in the country as quickly as possible, so they drafted Hudson to leave immediately.

MARIA: What a time for a young Englishman to be landing in Shanghai. It was 1854 and Hudson arrived in a city of dragon-roofed Buddhist temples, narrow shanty streets, dwarfed-footed women and pig-tailed men . . . and a very snobbish international settlement.

JENNIE: Hudson did not like the people in the international settlement and they surely did not like him. They thought that he was inferior to them since he was uneducated and unordained. This was a very lonely time for Hudson.

MARIA: That wasn't his only burden. His financial support did not arrive as promised and he was very homesick for Yorkshire. Also, he had terrible difficulty learning the Chinese language.

JENNIE: Hudson eventually got away from the other missionaries by traveling to the interior, where Europeans were much rarer. But, he found that the natives were more interested in his dress and appearance than in his message. He decided the only thing to do was to adopt Chinese dress.

MARIA: *(laughing)* I know . . . his manner of adopting Chinese ways gave me great pause when he asked me to marry him. The other missionaries considered him a disgrace. His radical departure from accepted missionary methods upset them. To them Christianity was a western religion.

HUDSON: Ah, but my ploy worked with the people of the villages. I was not even suspected of being a foreigner when traveling on the street with other Chinese.

MARIA: That's true, but his insistence almost cost him dearly again. He almost went blind when the ammonia used to dye his hair blew up in his face. Still, his adoption of Chinese clothing did get him into the villages.

JENNIE: Yes, and his western medicine got him tossed out of the villages. He was in direct competition with the village doctors.

MARIA: It was also about this time he resigned from the CES because their support was so sporadic. From that point on he was on his own and survived through private donations.

JENNIE: Hudson wandered around China, not idle, but aimless.

MARIA: It was about this time that I met Hudson. We did not think too much of each other at the time. He was still pining over some girl who had turned down yet another of his proposals. And I was not impressed with an Englishman who looked like a Chinaman.

JENNIE: What happened then?

MARIA: Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Hudson was very shy and retiring. I learned later that he was taken by me, but he made no advances. I had also come to reconsider him and found that I was quite taken by him. I didn't love him right away, but he certainly intrigued me.

JENNIE: But . . . you did get together?

MARIA: Well, eventually. I had been teaching at Miss Alderley's School for girls. Miss Alderley's dedication to the Lord and to missions was remarkable. I admired her very much. One day a friend brought a letter to me from Hudson. It was a proposal! I wanted to accept immediately, but I was forced to turn him down.

JENNIE: Turn him down? . . . Why?

MARIA: Miss Aldersley objected to the match. She wrote to my guardian in England outlining her opposition and as a result I was forbidden to marry Hudson.

JENNIE: What did Miss Aldersley object to?

HUDSON: I'll tell you: Nothing . . . nothing of substance. She objected to the fact that I was not ordained, that I was unconnected with a mission society, that I wore Chinese clothes, that I was uneducated . . . and . . . that I was short!

But, none of that mattered to me any longer. During a secret meeting

MARIA: arranged by a friend, I reconsidered and agreed to be engaged to Hudson. After that we had one more meeting in secret, during which Hudson made up for all the kisses he had missed by not being engaged sooner. This threw my guardian into a quandary. He now had not only Miss Aldersley's letter, but one from me and one from Hudson also.

JENNIE: Well, what did he do?

MARIA: Uncle William looked into Hudson's character and background . . . and gave his unqualified support to the marriage. He also wrote a scathing letter reprimanding Miss Aldersley for her lack of judgement. We were married in January of 1858.

HUDSON: And, right from the start, our marriage was a partnership. Maria was just the woman I needed to soften my rough edges and focus my enthusiasm and ambition.

MARIA: We also realized that Hudson needed more medical training, so shortly we returned to England so he could further his education. Also, we had both been quite ill. So this gave us time to recuperate, as well as to do some translation work with the help of a Chinese assistant. It was during this time that the China Inland Mission first took shape.

JENNIE: On top of everything else, you decided to form a new mission society?

MARIA: Yes, Hudson's experience with CES taught him much and he applied it to this new organization. He did not want to run it himself, but gradually became convinced that he was the man for the job. Everywhere he spoke, people were moved. He spoke of the "million a month dying without God".

JENNIE: I remember that Hudson wouldn't permit the payment of regular salaries. He required that missionaries serving in his organization to depend solely on God for their support.

MARIA: Yes, but we still attracted people who wanted to be missionaries. In 1866 we returned to China with our four children and fifteen raw recruits. Seven of those were single women who would meet up with eight others who had gone on ahead.

JENNIE: That must have been very rewarding.

MARIA: You would have thought so, but right from the start there were problems. Even on the ship during our crossing, the missionaries began bickering over the fact that some other mission societies were paying their missionaries. They also complained that some were getting more attention than others. It

took all Hudson's powers of persuasion to prevent a rift right then and there.

JENNIE: It must have been horrible.

MARIA: It was, and it got worse. Even though the new missionaries had agreed to adopt Chinese dress and appearance as Hudson had done, some of them mutinied at such measures. The missionaries wound up splitting into two groups, with some of them holding their own meetings and setting their own agenda.

JENNIE: But Hudson was able to save the mission?

MARIA: Yes, but at an exceedingly high price. *(Holding back choking tears)* Our little Gracie, who was only 8 years old, was very ill. Hudson was taking care of her. He gave her the best medical care he knew how to give. At the same time, others were sick, and he was called away to care for Jane McLean, one of the missionaries who had deserted us. Hudson went to her and helped her recover. His delay in treating Gracie was too great. She had water on the brain. In a few days, she was dead.

JENNIE: *(hugging and comforting Maria)* Oh, you poor woman. It must have been a terrible ordeal for you.

MARIA: Yes, it was. However, God used it to help Hudson's mission. The outpouring of sympathy was great, and brought us all back together, except for the McLean sisters, who ultimately refused to reconcile with Hudson and instead resigned from the mission.

JENNIE: McLean sisters? You mean . . . ?

MARIA: Yes. One of them was the very woman Hudson had left Gracie to minister to. That woman turned her back on us and left.

JENNIE: Some people have no humanity in them.

MARIA: We decided to leave it to the Lord to judge them. We had too much to do to dwell on them. It was a time of upheaval in China. Foreigners were greatly suspect and hated. Many of us were assaulted and our headquarters was burned to the ground. British soldiers tried to retaliate, but that just made things worse for us. Still, the worse it got, the better it got.

JENNIE: What do you mean?

MARIA: Our willingness to continue our ministry in the face of such adversity was a witness to the Chinese people. They came to us in droves, at least the

peasants did. We founded a church and shared the Gospel again and again.

JENNIE: I suppose that cheered Hudson up.

MARIA: Not really. He was still criticized by other missionaries, by the public and by newspaper editorials. He was in such great despair that he lost his will to go on, even contemplating suicide. I really feared for his life. Then he received a letter from a friend who knew how he felt. That friend shared with Hudson the secret: "To let my loving Savior work in me His will . . . Abiding, not striving or struggling . . . Not a striving to have faith, but a looking at the Faithful One seems all we need. A resting in the Loved One entirely".

HUDSON: That letter changed my entire life. As I followed my friend's advice, God made a new man of me. And He did it just in time.

MARIA: In January of 1870, we prepared to send the older children back to England for schooling. We had never been separated before. It was quite traumatic. Apparently too traumatic for our five-year old, Sammy. He passed away in February. In March our remaining four children sailed, and I said goodbye to them for what would be the last time.

JENNIE: Maria, we don't have to speak of your . . . your death if you would rather not.

MARIA: Thank you for your concern, Jennie, but it is all right. I died in the summer during childbirth. Actually, I grieved most for the baby boy I delivered who lived only two weeks. That little boy never experienced any of the joys our family had to offer. And, Hudson was all alone again.

JENNIE: I remember those days so clearly. Ever since coming to China with you and Hudson, I had never seen him so depressed. He would sit and talk about how much he missed you . . . how much you had meant to him . . . what a partner you had been. He would cry sometimes . . . and I just let him. Over the following months, my respect and admiration for him matured into love. When he proposed, I accepted.

MARIA: *(wiping away a tear and laughing at the same time)* Well, Jennie, you are the first woman who ever accepted one of Hudson's marriage proposals the first time he offered it.

JENNIE: Yes, I think Hudson was a little shocked when I did that. However, he seemed to recover quickly. We returned to England and were married in 1871. Hudson was overjoyed to be reunited with his children. And, during this time he made some administrative changes in the mission. The

following year we sailed back to China.

MARIA:

Was it easier this time?

JENNIE:

Yes, it was. Hudson had a very clear vision of what our mission was. I shared that vision, and we operated as one person. Over many years, one or the other of us would travel back and forth to England, bringing out more and more missionary volunteers.

MARIA:

Was this when you took on the relief effort for Hudson?

JENNIE:

Yes. There had been a terrible famine in China and Hudson had organized a great relief effort. There were many women volunteers willing to go and minister to the needy Chinese people, but Hudson was too ill to lead them. But, who else knew the language and the people well enough to lead the group? Why, I did, of course.

MARIA:

So, you volunteered to lead them?

JENNIE:

Volunteered? No. Actually, I was conscripted. I certainly did not like the idea of leaving seven children and a sick husband and traipsing all over the globe. But, Hudson convinced me it was the Lord's will, and so I went. My little band and I served in central China until Hudson's health improved and he could join us the following year.

MARIA:

So, then did Hudson just pick up where he had left off?

JENNIE:

Yes, the more he worked, the more he was determined to evangelize the entire country . . . to the very last soul.

MARIA:

Yes, I remember the scope of his vision.

JENNIE:

The very ambition of that vision may have led to its ultimately falling far short. We were so intent on preaching the gospel as quickly as we could to everyone in China that we never stopped long enough to train native ministers. As distrust of foreigners grew, we began to realize that we should have trained the Chinese to minister to each other. Then, in 1900, an order went out to kill all foreigners and to eradicate Christianity. More than 135 missionaries and 35 children were massacred. Ninety-one of our CIM missionaries were killed in one province alone.

MARIA:

Where were you at the time?

JENNIE:

We were in Switzerland. Hudson was very ill, and we had gone there to let him recuperate. It was horrible, having to listen to the news from China and

being unable to help our brothers and sisters. We had to just sit there and listen to the accounts of their deaths. Hudson never really recovered from the trauma. He stayed on in Switzerland until 1904, when I died. Then he returned to his beloved China, and died there one month after landing.

MARIA: It was right that he die in the country he worked so hard to save.

JENNIE: Very fitting.

MARIA: Oh, Hudson.

HUDSON: Yes, Maria?

MARIA: As long as we are all here, would you mind answering a question for us?

HUDSON: Of course, what is the question?

MARIA: Honestly now, . . . which of us did you love the most? (*Pause*) Hudson?

JENNIE: Hudson, are you there?

MARIA: Hudson?

Lights fade out.

Notes on presentation:

Lottie Moon was a southerner. If you have an actress that can convincingly do a southern accent, great. Otherwise, drop it. The set is the interior of a poor wooden schoolroom. An old blackboard is behind her. On her desk are some papers and books and a single candle. Lottie is dressed very drably. At one point she is wearing a tattered old sweater that she pokes her fingers through as she talks about lack of financial support. She is an early feminist. When she speaks of the equality of female missionaries to their male counterparts, she is very animated. Lottie should be lit by a warm pink/amber light.

C.T. Studd is portrayed as a very uptight and reserved man. He has tunnel vision for missions. He cannot understand why other people don't share his fanaticism. The set is a bare stage set with one small desk or table, a chair and a water glass and pitcher. Studd can start out by being lit in warm light. As his obsessiveness comes out, change the light slowly to a cold, harsh blue/grey tint.

The script on Hudson Taylor has some moments of levity to it. The story is told completely by Hudson's two dead wives. Hudson never appears, but his disembodied voice is heard from time to time. The women are seated on rocking chairs in heaven in white robes. They drink tea from a table between them and knit while they talk. The floor could be covered with cotton batting to suggest clouds. Dry ice in water will also produce a nice, low-lying fog for this effect. From their interaction, the two wives come off almost as co-conspirators. They obviously both love Hudson, but also both know his shortcomings.

<http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/profiles.pdf>