



Coca Cola Compassion

Jeff and Marie were leading a large tour group across Asia. They had toured all day and then went to the airport for a flight into a remote city in western China. The flight was delayed by two hours, which put them into China around 2 o'clock in the morning. After they had landed, their bags were taken and searched. The security was excessively severe. Many items that are never an issue in an airport were seized. Valuable objects were taken, and in some cases, thrown on the floor and broken with no regard to the owners or the property. One woman even had her underwear seized out of the suitcase. The treatment was rough and emotionally brutal, and it made the people justifiably angry.

The next morning, after only 2-3 hours of sleep, the group had to be up and on their way again to make their next appointment. Along the way they stopped the buses at a roadside rest stop. Some of the exhausted travelers walked in and saw Coca Cola in the coolers and immediately went straight to them. They loaded up and went to the cashier to pay for their prize, but the cashier refused to take their credit cards, and of course the people had had no opportunity to exchange currency, therefore—no money, no Coke! Marie described that you could just see the countenance of the people fall. For some, that was the last straw! They were done with China and wanted nothing more than to get out of the country posthaste.

But, just then a small, older, Chinese woman, standing near the register, perceived the situation and stepped forward and bought a Coke for that woman who had been so mistreated at the airport. With not a word of English, for she spoke not the language, she bought 2-3 more Cokes, and as Jeff told me, it was for those people who seemed to most need it. That simple act of kindness by a native daughter spread through the whole group and everyone's spirits seemed to lift. Maybe China wasn't so bad after all. They went on and had a wonderful five days in China.

You know I wonder, if the kingdom of God on earth were to be judged by the kindness and compassion of its citizens now, I wonder how many foreigners would want to enter or stay after spending time with me.

