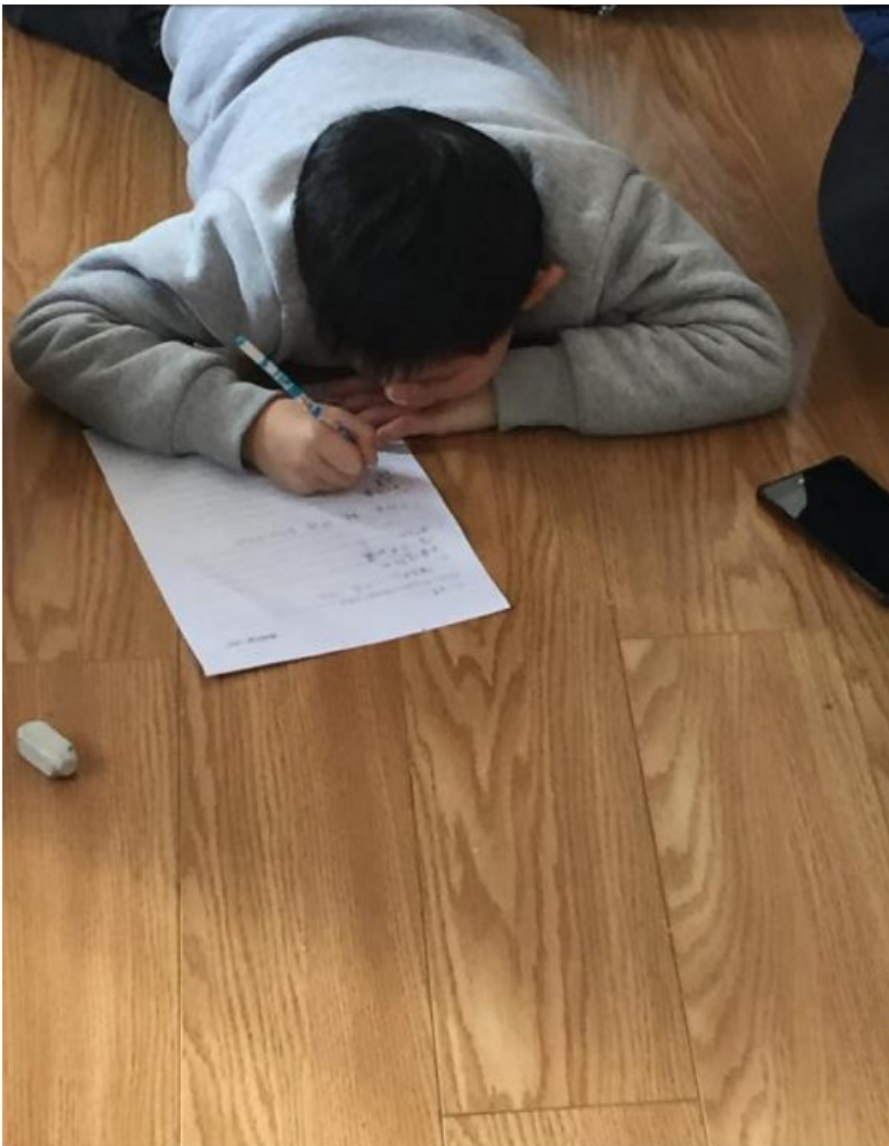


North Korea: Orphan Care

“Han Yong-jo” is not quite an orphan. His North Korean mother was sex-trafficked out of North Korea into China. There, she was married to a Chinese man who paid a fee to her broker. China’s One Child Policy and a cultural preference for boys created a generation of Chinese men without partners. Trafficked North Korean women fill some of that void.

Once in China, though, North Korean women have no legal status, no opportunity for education and are sometimes mistreated by their husbands. Many opt to abandon their families and defect to South Korea, which is what Han Yong-jo’s mother did. After she left, Han Yong-jo’s father was unable to care for him.

The number of North Korean orphans like Han Yong-jo in China increases daily. Adding to that number are orphans who lost their parents to starvation, prison, or martyrdom in North Korea, along with others who became separated from their parents along the defection trail. None of them have any sort of legal status in China, even those with one Chinese parent. To send them back to North Korea would mean death by starvation or imprisonment.



Han Yong-jo will be among the first children to experience family-centered care for North Korean orphans.

During VOM's years of ministry to North Koreans in China, field workers have met many of these orphans. They suffer not only from physical illness, but from deep psychological trauma. They need more than a building that provides lodging, food, and medical attention—they need a family. However, with no legal status, no one can adopt them.

This year, VOM will begin a pilot program for a family-oriented, orphan care home to address the needs of North Korean children and those of mixed North Korean/Chinese descent. Each child brought into the home will come through an existing North Korean Christian organization — a missionary, a church, or a North Korean receiving discipleship.

The home will be limited to five or six children and will function like a family. Staff and teachers will not only live with the children, but they will become the spiritual mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters of these children. Teachers and staff will disciple the orphans, housing them not only in a building, but in the family of Christ; a family which, unlike their own families, will never leave nor abandon them. This method of providing a family-centered place for orphans is what the underground North Korean church has long done anyway. VOM hopes to provide them the tools to minister in their methods, instead of the traditional Western orphanage method.

The future orphan care home is under renovation, and God is already at work drawing people to himself. The Christian worker directing the orphan care project also disciples several North Korean women who were sold and married to Chinese men, like Han Yong-jo's mother. The husband of one of these women, who is not believer, was so impressed by the changes he saw in his wife's life that he volunteered his time to work on the orphan home. As the Christian worker and the man have spent time working together, the Chinese man is opening up to Christ.

Please pray for the Chinese man, and all the children who will be touched through this orphan care project. Pray that God would reveal whether this kind of project can be multiplied all over China to care for North Korea orphans.

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