

By Julie Cornelius-Huang

(Based on a true story)

"We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may" (Articles of Faith 1:11).

Iren was having fun visiting Taiwan. His grandfather, his Yéyé, took him and his little sister, Ila, to the zoo and on a ferry ride to a small island. They went to beautiful gardens filled with mango trees and orchids. And they visited a mountain where monkeys tried to steal their food! The monkeys made Ila nervous, but Iren thought they were awesome.

Yéyé was teaching Iren and Ila all about where their family came from. He took them to meet all of their relatives and to restaurants to try new foods. Iren had been practicing with chopsticks. He was getting really good.

One day Yéyé took Iren, Ila, and their parents to a special place. It was a big building with large, open doors and shiny wooden floors. Before they went in, Iren and his family took off their shoes. "This is a place

where you have to be reverent," Mom said. "Just like at our church."

"Is this a church?" Iren asked. It sure didn't look like any church he'd ever seen. The building's colorful roof had curled-up edges. People in dark blue robes walked quietly through the doors.

"Sort of," said Mom. "It's a Buddhist temple. But people don't get married or sealed here, like in our temples. It's a church building for Yéyé's religion. He comes here to learn the teachings of Buddha and to help people."

Dad added, "Do you remember the earthquake in Taiwan we saw on the news a month ago? Yéyé and the other volunteers at this temple all helped after the earthquake was over."

"What did they do?" asked Ila.

"I think they brought water to people and cleaned up rubble," said Dad. "They also helped people who lost their homes find a place to stay."

"Whoa," said Iren. He looked at Yéyé. "That sounds like a lot of work!" Yéyé smiled and nodded.

When they went in the temple, Iren noticed how quiet and peaceful it was. He looked around and saw a large wooden statue. Ila and Iren stopped and stared.

"Is that Buddha?" Iren asked.

Mom nodded.

Yéyé said something to Dad in Chinese, pressed his hands together, and bowed in front of the statue of Buddha three times.

"Yéyé is teaching us how he shows respect for Buddha," Dad said, his voice just above a whisper.

Iren scrunched his eyebrows together. "Isn't that . . . ?" He tried to remember something he'd heard before. "Isn't that worshipping idols?"

"Buddhists don't actually worship Buddha," Dad said. "Buddha was a great teacher, and they visit his statue to remember what he taught."

"When people bow here, they're showing respect—

sort of like shaking hands," Mom whispered. "Yéyé bows to show respect for Buddha and what he taught."

Mom put her arms around Iren and Ila. "And do you know what?"

"What?" Ila asked.

"These are all God's children. He loves them. He loves what they're doing to help each other."

Iren looked over at Yéyé and all the other people sitting quietly. He felt warm and good inside and knew what Mom said was true. Iren said a little prayer to Heavenly Father: *Thank you for helping me meet more of your children.* ♦

The author lives in Utah, USA.

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All Children of God

"It's a Buddhist temple," said Mom.
"This is Yéyé's religion."

